
# e Inevitable Future

*or*

# Man's Essential Immortality



—— BY ——

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With the Author's Cordial
Greetings

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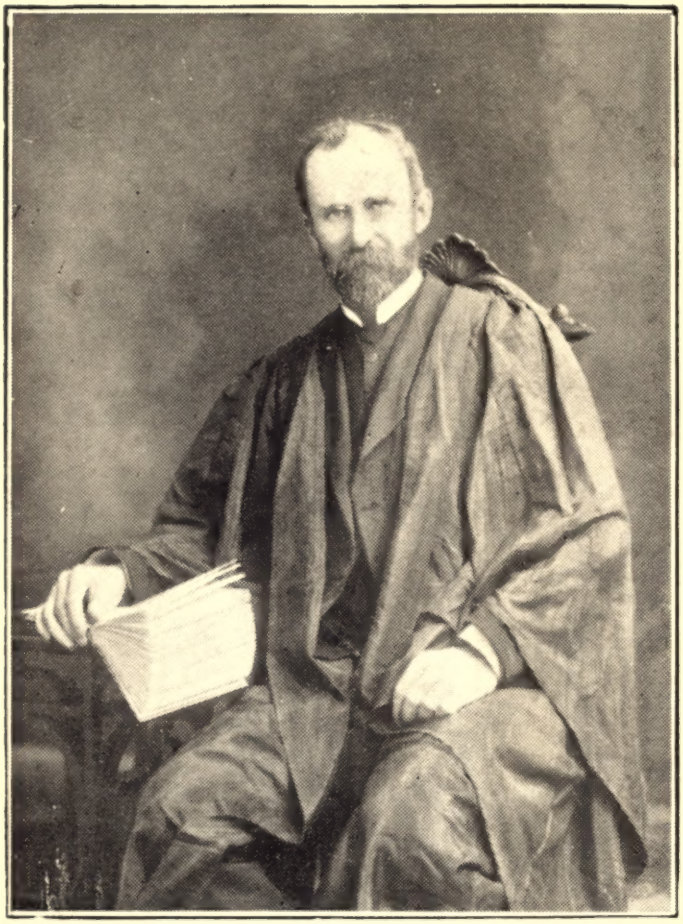
# THE INEVITABLE FUTURE



*Ever yours in His Love and Service*

Harlyon Stanio

# The Inevitable Future

## *or*

## *Man's Essential Immortality*

*"This Mortal must put on Immortality."*

*"Philosophy cannot avoid considering the last things . . .*
*. . . Man's end is not dissolution but eternity."—*
*Principal Forsyth, M.A., D.D.*

*My own dim life should teach me this*
*That life shall live for evermore—Tennyson.*

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CHAPTER I.—PREFATORY.

# The Most Momentous Question

**"IF A MAN DIE, SHALL HE LIVE AGAIN?"—JOB.**

This question comes from the far-distant past, and has haunted all the ages, and never with a greater insistence and pathos than in these tragic days of the **great war.** The doubt implied is agonising millions of hearts. Doubt and Fear and Despair are abroad, and the minds of men are "**sorely amazed.**" Verily, there never was an age that appealed more for a strong and definite answer than the present. The darkness of the shadow of death is upon us, and, confused in its gloom, many are missing **faith's mystic path of hope.** With a new pathos the cry of the wanderers is heard. "The night is dark, and I am far from home." They call for the "**Kindly Light" of the Immortal Hope** to guide into the path of peace—**the Homeward Way.** All who know this way are called to let their light shine—even though it be but with a feeble ray. We fain would do our "bit," and be as a hand to lift the lamp of the life to come, which may cheer the darkened heart and guide into the "right way"—upon which ever shines "the light of the dawn of the perfect day" for which our tear-dimmed eyes are watching. The considerations put forth in the following discussions have been of service to some, and now, by request, and in the hope of ministering to others, they are sent forth in this little book on their mission of consolation.

## The Most Definite Answer.

**"THIS MORTAL MUST PUT ON IMMORTALITY."—ST. PAUL.**

We have taken this quotation as summarising the final and most **definite answer** to be found. It is part of the Christian Gospel. With this we **begin**, and with this we also **finish.** All that comes between is to reinforce this declaration, and establish **beyond reasonable doubt** the fact of **human** immortality. Apart from this fact, with its necessary and far-reaching implications, there can be no consolation or reason for hope and fortitude, hence it seems to us to be

THE FACT OF FACTS THAT MATTERS

and to make it clear that it **is** a fact—really **beyond any serious controversy,** is the great desideratum. As to the "**intrinsic nature**" of this Life Eternal, though of consuming interest and the subject of a vast diversity of opinion, yet it must be regarded, after all, as **a matter of detail,** hence not of first importance and, with the exception of some incidental references, it does not come within the scope of our present discussion.

To avoid misapprehension, we may emphasise at the outset that we have in no way attempted to supersede the "**sure word**" of the sacred Scriptures nor furnish a substitute for the testimony of history. Our aim has been to furnish **subsidiary and corroborative evidence** by which to reinforce faith in the great doctrine of the future life. The "**evidence in chief**" must ever be in the

"TESTIMONY OF JESUS"

and the witness of His apostles. But the proof found in other directions has its place, and is of more value than many suppose. Some are apt to depreciate this secondary evidence—especially that which is based upon what they term philosophical grounds, as if of so little service that it is almost negligible. We are not concerned about "philosophical proofs," so called, but it seems to us that the practical value of using the facts of the **natural** to lead up to the truths of the **spiritual**—especially in these days when men are so dominated by material ideas—is manifest. We know that it was the habit of our Divine Teacher to utilise the facts of the **natural and temporal** to strengthen faith in the **spiritual and eternal**. St. Paul, in his apologia on this particular subject, adopted a similar method. The **casual observer** ("foolish," he calls him) would see no relation between the "natural" and the "spiritual," because there was no visible connection, but **he** saw many evident and instructive parallels. For example: As the spiritual entity emerged through death, so even a grain of wheat was **evolved through death.** Both "**changes**" were mysterious and inexplicable, and there was no more reason for doubting the reality of one than the other. With many such homely and familiar examples, he strove to find a graduating path, so to speak by which those of feebler faith might reach the sun-lit heights of his triumphant assurance—whereon he stood when he declared that, "**As in Adam, all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. . . . This mortal must put on immortality.**" Now, if this method was **called for** in St. Paul's day, it seems to us that it is **equally needed** at the present time;

and, if it proved **effective** in the apostolic times, it is not likely to be **less efficient** nowadays. There was no doubt as to the gross materialism that St. Paul had to combat, and the materialism of our time is equally apparent. It is not less real, though it may be more **refined—on the surface.** Though less grossly offensive, it is **not less destructive** to the moral fibre and the spiritual sense.

**THE FAILURE OF THE MATERIALISTIC THEORY**

to account for the whole man, or, indeed to furnish a reason for anything—is more and more recognised by serious and competent minds, but whilst **philosophically,** materialism may not count, we fear that with the crowd **practically** little else counts. This, perhaps, is nowhere more evident than in these lands under the Southern Cross. Men "took their lives in both hands," and came to this new country for the set purpose to "get on." Here, under these sunny skies, in a wide, free world—far from the reminders of the faith and fear of their fathers—with a climate which lures into the open air, and fascinating opportunities for material gain and sensuous gratification, men have by degrees **ceased to consider** spiritual things. Without realising it, they have treated the spiritual and the eternal as **not worth their attention**. Unconsciously they have developed

**THE ESAU TYPE**

and have sacrificed their soul's birth-right at the shrine of the "**great god of getting on.**" Habitually absorbed in earthly things, their spiritual sensibilities have become **atrophied** and their life little more than the **burying place** of their nobler possibilities. With men in this condition, it is natural to find it hard to apprehend the reality of "things not seen." When the dav comes, as come it has for many—that there is **nothing left to them but the spiritual**—they are in a sorry plight. . . These, like the "certain man" in the parable, lie by the wayside, robbed, and, spiritually, more than "half-dead." Robbed and well nigh done to death by the "thieves" of their own passions—and many a "priest and Levite" pass them by on the other side. But the example of our Divine Lord and His chief apostle bids us be "**all things to all men,** that we may save some," and would have us strive to bring these victims of earthliness to the "inn" of faith and life. To do this we have striven to "**come where these men are,**" and reach them through the media of the things by which they are

**VAINLY ENDEAVOURING TO LIVE.**

We remember how our **Great Teacher** adapted His methods,

and, for example, endeavoured to reach men and lead them to **faith** through the clothing of the lilies, and we, too, would seek to come nearer to men and help them to believe in the great things of their being, through **their own personality**, which clothes the soul. We thus make our appeal, not by something that may seem to them as some hazy, vague abstraction or far-off event, but by the patent and undoubted facts of **their own personal nature and attributes**. By this method men **must see** that faith in their eternal destiny is not a matter of credulity—accepting some unreasoned assumption—but results from the recognition of the essential meaning of the powers of their personality. In fine, our method is an effort to meet the prevailing mental attitude by presenting facts which **appeal to the ordinary mind** and go to prove that the life eternal is not an arbitrary assumption or a beautiful dream, but a natural and necessary corollary of the make-up of man, as he lives and strives here in the flesh; so that if a man really **believes in himself and all his essential attributes, he must believe in his personal immortality.**

### FOR HOMELY, EARNEST PEOPLE.

It may be well to intimate here that these discussions were not designed **primarily for the schoolmen,** but rather for the **general reader.** Hence, technical and philosophical terms **have** been carefully avoided, as likely to be little more than **an** unknown tongue to many. A world of "**objections**" has also been passed by, as their discussion would probably not **prove** of any real service. Those who apprehend the vital seriousness of this, the great question of questions, have little time and less heart for the debate of **side issues** and **petty refinements**, but seek the sure foundation in absolute essentials—**the eternal** verities—whereon to rest their soul.

CHAPTER II.

# The Future Life—a Mystery—Within the Veil

"BEHOLD I SHOW YOU A MYSTERY."—ST. PAUL.

"MAN DIETH AND GIVETH UP THE GHOST, AND WHERE IS HE? . . . . . A LAND OF THICK DARKNESS, AS DARKNESS ITSELF. . . . THE SHADOW OF DEATH. . . . WHERE LIGHT IS AS DARKNESS."—JOB.

"TWILIGHT AND EVENING BELL, AND AFTER THAT—THE DARK."—TENNYSON.

The break between the **spiritual** and **material** worlds is absolute and inevitable. The poet may sing sweetly of the "thorny path meeting the golden street," but the bridge to link the two has never been found. It **ever** is

"That untravelled world whose margin fades,
For ever and for ever as we move."

The One most able to furnish a link between the seen and the unseen was He who was Lord of both worlds, and to whom both were as one. Whilst it is true that He made men feel that the

UNSEEN WAS VERY NEAR

as if both worlds were united in His person and His transition from the earthly to the heavenly was perhaps designed to remove as far as possible the mystery of the unseen, yet here the border land is obscured by a cloud wherein all our wondering thoughts are lost. It is ever so. Whenever we attempt to get a working idea of anything beyond the grave, we seem to arrive at a vacuous nothingness—where all our thinking is in vain, and our powers of imagination are as nothing. To the philosopher it is "**the unknown**"; to the poet, it is "**the land of darkness**"; to the saint it is "**the unseen holy**"; and to all it is a **mystery.** As this fact may be regarded as a prima-facie difficulty in arriving at an assured and adequate belief in the reality of the life to come, it claims our first consideration.

Now, it is not our intention to attempt to remove, or even minimise, the obscurity of the life beyond, but rather to show that **its mystery should not militate against belief in its reality.**

### A PRELIMINARY CAUTION.

1. Let us, in the first place, remind ourselves, by way of caution, that we are not necessarily competent judges **as to what reality is.** Most of us are not philosophers, and are not capable of appreciating the difficulty in determining what constitutes "**reality.**" But we all know enough of our limitations to apprehend that our powers of perception are not always a safe guide to our judgment. It is easily discovered that our ideas are never infallible as the criteria of what things really are. Have we not to be constantly on our guard lest we be deceived? Because we know that things are never absolutely what they appear to be. Our common speech betrays our fallibility. For example, we say, "Empty as air," whereas we know that although the atmosphere **appears** to be empty, it is really crammed with the elements essential to our life. Again, "Clear as water" is common idiom; yet we know that a myriad organisms as real and perfect as our own bodies may live and move unnoticed in a drop of water. Here are two bars of iron which **appear exactly alike.** Even a microscope can discover but little serious difference. Yet they are **so unlike** that, while you may handle one with impunity, to touch the other would mean instant death. Why? Because it is charged with that mysterious and mighty dynamic called electricity. These are examples from the common things around us, wherein our senses prove untrustworthy, but when we come to more complex and abstruse things, we discover that our powers of observation and insight are hopelessly at sea. Nor need we be surprised at this—when we remember that the men who have given a life-time to the training of their powers of insight and to the study of the nature of things, and have gathered the harvest of the ages of research, are constantly discovering errors and "discrepancies" in their scientific conclusions. Indeed, are not their standard text books discarded every few years? It is plain, then, that at best, human powers of insight, with all the helps that have been devised, are not to be trusted to discover the **exact nature** of even ordinary things in this old world of ours. When we recognise that this is so commonly and so obviously the case, need we be disconcerted when we are told that what, to our senses, appears to have no reality, is the **reality of all realities,** and that which **appears as nothing is more than everything** that seems something to our senses.

> "How much I know, yet know not how.
> The thing I know can be!" (T. T. Lynch.)

2. This leads us in the next place to notice that the life beyond the grave is **obviously not the only mystery.** If it were the only thing veiled in obscurity and stood alone within the shadow of enigma, there might be some semblance of justification for doubting its reality. But it is only **one of a world of mysteries.** Indeed, there is nothing that is not mysterious. All knowledge leads to the discovery of mystery. It may seem paradoxical, but it is true, that it is only our ignorance hides the mystery of things from us. The ultimate discovery of all research is darkness. Only light discovers the darkness. Every atom has a darkness within it which no X-ray can penetrate. We know a world **about it,** but when we ask **what** it is, there is no answer. It is as dark and silent as the tomb. "We know the **methods** of many mysteries," says R. H. Hutton, "but the ultimate mystery we cannot fathom at all." Look at that illusive indefinable something we call Life. All the ages have been asking, "**What is Life?**" We perceive with increasing insight and wonder the infinite variety of its mighty workings, but the solution of its problem seems as far, even further, beyond us than ever. The more we know of it, the more apparent our ignorance becomes. When this is true of the most common-place manifestations of life, even of the elemental life of the plant, what shall be said of it in the higher spheres? Who can, for instance, understand our mental life? Who can explain the **evolution of a thought?** Or who can find even a hint as to how the memory garners its harvest and stores its myriad treasures? By what means do we walk, yea, fly—through the scenes of a life-time? By what eyes do we see again those scenes— in all their vivid clearness and exquisite beauty? Oh, the loveliness of those "**Angel faces, which we have loved long since!**" All the products of the painters' art pale beside the vision of memory's eye. Then, what melodies from long ago burst upon our mental ear! Canst thou tell by what magic power those voices sing again? Or by what avenues they reach thy ravished soul?

What a world of mystery is here? We do not seem even to have begun to understand how these familiar things happen. What life is, and all the marvellous workings of the mind belong to a knowledge beyond us all. Hidden within an impenetrable veil, secret as the nature of Him who made us so. Yet these are realities which no one doubts. Why, then, should we doubt the continued life of man, apart from material conditions, because it is beyond the ken of our understanding? Especially when those very "material conditions" are themselves inexplicable. The fact is that it would be more astonishing if it were

not **mysterious.** If we but realised the **exceeding greatness of the mystery of man**—ordinary mundane man—we would cease to be confounded by the cloud which obscures the great beyond of his future life. Indeed the more we look into the nature of things, the more we see that the absolute inscrutability of the spiritual entity is **not extraordinary or arbitrary, but natural and necessary.** When all realities are mysteries, why should the great beyond be an exception? It is plain that with our present limitations, it is not possible to **lift the veil of mystery from anything**. Then, to put it mildly, to doubt the reality of anything, because per se it is **inexplicable, is simply irrational.**

### AN OBVIOUS REASON.

3. In the next place, let us notice that the undoubted mystery of the future life is attributable to the common and obvious reason that **experience is the basis of all our knowledge.** That is to say, we have to gain all our knowledge for ourselves. For example, is it not a mere truism to say that we can only **know life by living it?** All have to make the discovery that "there is no royal road to learning." No one can learn even the A.B.C. for us, nor can we master the addition table by proxy. We must acquire our quota of knowledge through our own senses. Money can buy much; love can do more, but no power known to us can abrogate or even relax in the least degree this obvious law of our being. This fact is the more evident when one of the senses is absent. Take, for example, the blind. How pathetic and utterly unavailing are their efforts to imagine the nature of color! To them any appreciable idea of it seems impossible. They sometimes think that colors are distinguishable by some peculiarity of surface, and suppose, for instance, that white is smooth and red is rough. They can no more realise what the colors of the rainbow are like than the "natural man" can discern the "spiritual body." The very obvious reason is that neither has the necessary faculty of discernment. In one the physical eye is absent, and in the other the spiritual vision is wanting. Hence, to the one, color is a mystery, and to the other, the spiritual entity is inscrutable.

Then, are we not confronted at every stage in our development by the fact that we have to **learn what life is for ourselves?** Only a man can know the things of a man. Take, for example, that romance of early maturity—with which the novelist delights to conjure, and calls "**falling in love.**" To the undeveloped boy of, say, eight years of age, the **vagaries of the lover** are ridiculous. Indeed, a kind of infatuation—

which he, perhaps, will call "silly." "What an absurdity it is to say of a mere girl, and no relation of his—"**For bonnie Annie Laurie, I'd lay me doon and dee!**" Surely the man has taken leave of his wits!" . . The veil is on his heart, and he has no eyes to discern the things of a man. By and bye the lover will emerge and indulge in "**love's sacred folly,**" and have little regard for the sober logic of things.

Again, in the common relations of life, similar characteristics appear. Who, for example, can enter

**THE SACRED TEMPLE OF MATERNAL LOVE, EXCEPT A MOTHER?**

We may be able to write learned and sympathetic disquisitions upon the evolution of a mother; we may admire even to adoration the sublime beauty of mother-love, but, withal, we are but **outsiders**—like the "friend of the bridegroom." The fact is we can no more enter **within the veil of that sacred shrine** until the maternal experience is actually ours than we could while in this mortal body enter the "**unseen holy**" **of the spiritual world.**

**THE CROWNING MYSTERY.**

Once more there is the example of that beatific illumination which comes to a man when he is "**born of the Spirit.**" This is the highest experience possible to man in his earthly state. It is a spiritual experience, and links him with the world beyond. Professor Drummond used to speak of it as an **experience on the frontier**, where the natural and spiritual worlds meet. It is also the **crowning mystery** of this mortal life. An experience, like the movement of the impalpable atmosphere in space, "whence it cometh and whither it goeth"—none can tell. Yet there is no uncertainty about its reality. So distinct is the "change," that it is freely described as a "passing from death unto life." "Old things are passed away, and behold all things are become new," declares one who had had this experience. Millions of intelligent men have borne similar testimony. Its reality is irrefragable. Nevertheless, no man can understand its nature until he has realised it for himself. We may have accurate information **about** it, and may be assured that we have an adequate idea of what it really means, but when it becomes our happy experience, we are straightway amazed at our former blindness. Like the man of old, who was born blind and received his sight, we cannot explain how it happened, but one thing we do know, that, "whereas we were blind, now we see." Innumerable testimonies could be cited to show that there is no other way of understanding what it is to be a "new

creature in Christ Jesus," except by personal experience. Let a simple one suffice: An expert teacher once tried to explain this new birth to her class. They were intelligent and eager to learn, but when, at the close of the lesson, they were asked if they understood, they were all silent, except one, who naively answered, "Yes, teacher, but I never understood till I felt it." It is ever so. Nor need this fact surprise us when we call to mind that the

**GREATEST OF ALL TEACHERS**

by whom it was first demanded made no attempt to explain its nature. Nicodemus came to the Master with an assured, "**We know**" this and that—as if the mystery of things did not trouble him. But in one sentence our Lord swept away his confidence, and implied that it was the result of blindness, "Except a man be born again, he cannot **see** the Kingdom of God." He was like the blind, seeking to understand color, by a touch of the hand. His need was not **knowledge**, but **faculty**. To see the signs of the divine power was not to realise the divine nature. The justification of our Lord's claim was not in the **signs** which Nicodemus saw, but in His **nature**. Not in what He **did**, but in what He **was**. This was spiritual, and could only be understood by the spiritual mind.

As no one can appreciate the natural world till he has actually **lived** in it, no more can one realise the spiritual world until he has a **vital sense** of it. And as the powers by which the fleshly knowledge comes are derived from his earthly parents, even so the spiritual knowledge must come through a spiritual parentage. Herein the Master enunciated a great and reasonable truth, but to this "blind leader of the blind," it was an absurd philosophy and an impossible condition. In reply, our Lord only made his assertion more emphatic, and gave it direct personal application, "**Ye** must be born anew."

Then, in answer to his humbler enquiry, the Master seems to imply that the primary purpose of this "man of the Pharisees" was to gain some **knowledge of "heavenly things."** As a "Teacher come from God," he would be likely to throw some light upon the problems of the unseen world, which were a matter of great controversy with the Sadducees. The Lord saw what was in his mind, and confronted him with the question, "If I have told you earthly things, and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you of heavenly things?" Then He proceeded to declare that what he needed was not to know the "how" of things here or in heaven, but "**Life**"—

the life that gave a spiritual sense—a present discernment of divine things, and a certain **possession of Eternal Life.** This life He came to give, and not to give interesting information that would please the curious, but serve no good purpose.

These examples indicate that it is the **designed condition** of this earthly life from its lowest to its highest experience that it should be one continual mystery. Our future is ever unknown. We go from mystery to greater mystery, till we discover that all is mystery. **The future is only the consummation of the present.** The experience of every day is designed to teach us to add to our faith patience and wait till

**THE DAY DAWNS, AND THE SHADOWS FLEE AWAY.**

In the last place, it seems appropriate that we should enquire whether **any good purpose would really be served by lifting the veil from the life to come.** Would it promote the development of the highest and best in man? In a word, if the future were rendered **less inscrutable,** would the present be rendered **more effective** in its purpose? This is a practical test, and appeals to the ordinary mind.

Let us first consult those who have given evidence, not only of a **most competent knowledge** of the nature and possibilities of man, but also the **greatest devotion to his highest good.** In the forefront of these stands the greatest Teacher of all. In His teaching we find that, whilst He was positive and definite as to the **fact of the future life** in the "Father's House," He tells us very little as to the **manner** of that existence. This omission was manifestly not the result of ignorance or oversight. It is evident, as Dr. Watson remarks, that He was all the while capable of making "a more complete apocalypse. . . . What boundless possibilities of life might not Jesus have revealed in the sphere of the unseen! We search in vain for these open mysteries—this lifting of the veil from the occult. Whatever Jesus may have seen, and whatever He may have known, were locked in His breast

> " . . . . or something sealed
> The lips of that Evangelist."

He gives us at least one parable to show the futility of revelations from the dead. Dives thought that if one rose from the dead, and went to his brethren, his testimony and warning would be effective. From the answer given, it is clear that **our Lord had no confidence in spectacular aids to or substitutes for faith.** At all events, it is patent that He who had a perfect knowledge of the unseen and understood to the full the disabilities peculiar to our present conditions,

left our knowledge with its present limitations. If it had been possible to have lifted the veil from the future, and if any good purpose would have been served by a fuller revelation of that great beyond, whither He was going, He certainly would not have failed to make some additional apocalypse.

Turning from the Master to His most competent apostle, we have the **manifest reserve of St. Paul**. It is clear that he apprehended, not only the mystery of the world to come, but also that its obscurity was an obstacle in the way of the faith of some. Yet he makes no attempt to lift the veil or even to minimise the obscurity. This is the more significant when we perceive on the one hand the apostle's soul-consuming zeal to "present every man perfect," and, on the other hand, that of all the men of his time, he was, perhaps, the most capable of making a contribution to the knowledge of occult things. Does he not tell us that he had been "caught up into the third heaven," and had had **miraculous revelations in Paradise**? Yet for some reason he does not make use of this esoteric insight. He tells us in a somewhat cryptic expression that it was "not lawful for a man to utter" what he had heard, but he does not explain why he was thus restrained. In another passage (I. Cor., XIII.), however, he gives a suggestive hint —which intimates that it was not the best thing in life to "understand all mysteries." He evidently thought such knowledge tended rather to "puff up" than to "build up." In his opinion, it promoted rather the folly of the "foolish" than "soundness of mind." In a word, that this **knowledge of the occult was of no appreciable advantage in the development of character.**

### SAINTS AND THE OCCULT.

Now, if we turn to the evidence from experience, we shall find that the **reticence** of the Divine Founder of Christianity and His greatest apostle is **amply justified**. It seems evident from the testimony of the Christian centuries that, as a rule, the saints have not felt the need of any such knowledge. That their dead "died in the Lord" and were "living unto God" they verily believed, and were therewith content. As to how the functions of their personality were maintained apart from material conditions and other details concerning the nature of their existence, they regarded as belonging to a knowledge which was, at least, **superfluous**. Through the grace of the Spirit, they had a real fellowship with their risen Lord and this filled the measure of their need. Of course, all the saints, like Charles Kingsley, have had a **"reverent curiosity"** concerning the "unseen holy." Just as

a boy has a natural curiosity to know what it really means to be a full-grown man, so good men have had a desire to know what it is to be a "**saint made perfect.**" But, as the development of the healthy boy is not impeded by his ignorance of the things peculiar to maturity, no more have healthy saints found the veil which has obscured the "glorified saints" any hindrance to their progress in the Christly life. It has not been by any spectacular **demonstration of "psychic forces"** that they have renewed their strength, nor has it been by **waiting upon "mediums"** that they have discovered the secret power by which things beneath are overcome, and have been able to rise upon the wings of noble ideals. In a word, the secret of a holy and godly life is not in a knowledge of the occult things of the dead, but in a vital sense of the living Christ mediated by the Holy Spirit. If, then, we

**REASON FROM THE BEST IN MAN**

(which is the method we propose in these papers), we shall conclude that the unveiling of the "region of the dead" is not, from a **practical point of view, really desirable**; that is, if the one real and practical purpose of man in this life is to develop **character** and become like his Maker. For the beauty of Godliness does not come through the unveiling of the secrets of the occult, but the unveiling of man's own heart, and the **inward vision, not of man—living or dead—but of God.** The fact is that this desire for a sensuous insight into the things of the dead is really a craving of the carnal mind and tends more to the earthly than the heavenly, and the more we look into it, the more we shall see the wis dom of the "hiding" of the future. If it were otherwise it would not comport with our present nature, nor would this earthly life be suited to prepare for it. The cloud which hides the future does not obscure the present. There is ever light enough vouchsafed whereby to make the best of to-day, and the wise and good will not be **anxious** for more.

"Lead kindly light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead Thou me on.
The night is dark, and I am far from home,
Lead Thou me on.
Keep Thou my feet, **I do not ask to see**
**The distant scene: One step enough for me.**"

CHAPTER III.

# The Philsophy of Terrestrial Default

"WANTING IS WHAT?"

What is the matter with the world? "**The whole creation groaneth and travaileth.**" Want is universal and constant. Nothing is satisfied. Down to the minutest detail—everything demands something else. Nothing can stand alone. Every atom requires other atoms. The infinitesimal ultimately requires the infinite. Through all the order of known existence —from the primordial to the prime, the higher the order, the larger and more imperative the demands. Demands grow with all development, advance with all progress, and rise with every ascent. **The nearer to perfection the further from satisfaction**, is the rule of the whole creation. When man, the climax of creation, emerges he is a being with "**infinite craving.**" Everything is at his command, but nothing is adequate. Every enrichment only adds to his sense of privation. He who has most of what this world can give, is least satisfied. "All the rivers run into the sea, but the sea is not full." The foaming waves of the "**homeless sea,**" which sigh and moan upon every shore, are an **allegory of the passions of the human soul**, which are forever at war with their limitations, and ever demand something beyond the possibilities of this material sphere.

**Why is it thus with man?** This condition, which is not exceptional or extraordinary, but general and normal—must have some significance. Our minds are so constituted that we cannot conceive of **anything that has no reason or purpose for its existence.** Everything **must** be the expression of some thought. Nothing can originate by blind chance. It is impossible. We take it then that, in the nature of things, man's demand for more than his present environment is capable of supplying must have some explanation. In a thousand respects, the **world we live in is intelligible**, and why should this evident and important fact be without meaning?

### WHAT THE "MAGNETIC NEEDLE" PROVED.

Let us illustrate what we mean: Here, for example, is the "**magnetic needle.**" The moment you magnetise a bar of steel it strives to set itself in the direction of north and south. From this unvarying fact, it was assumed, that the earth has "**magnetic poles,**" and that these poles are north and south respectively. Now, experiment has proved this inference to be correct. Only a short time ago it was verified. When Captain Scott's expedition in the "**Nimrod**" crossed a certain point in the Antarctic, the needle of the compass reversed its position automatically, and thus demonstrated the fact of the magnetic pole. Herein nature proved herself **intelligible**. . . . So, when we are confronted by the fact that nothing in the possible experiences of this mortal state can satisfy man—especially when this dissatisfaction points to the highest and best things within our knowledge—things which are essential to our well-being—indeed, the things that make us men—we conclude that there is **something** in man analogous to the magnetic needle pointing to the magnetic poles of a life beyond. And have we not as much reason to believe that this conclusion will prove as true as any deduction of physical science. Hence, we contend that belief in a future life is not based upon **conjecture, but is a corollary from the structure of man and the nature of things.** This reasoning requires as a logical sequence that "this mortal must put on immortality." It is inevitable. He who made man, made the world, and the one was made for the other, and if it had been intended that the world should satisfy man, it would have been made adequate for the purpose. Hence that this world was never designed to satisfy man is evident. Its deficiency shows that it was meant as a temporary arrangement, and postulates another—a better world, more adequate for the demands with which man was created.

CHAPTER IV.

# The Meaning of the Pilgrim Instinct

"**Now they desire a better country.**" This is an age-long desire and has given man a **quest which has persisted through all the centuries.**

"When the world was young,
And earth was nigher to heaven than now,"

man declared himself a "**stranger on the earth.**" A stranger seeking a home. Whole millenniums have been exhausted in the seeking, and still man has not "attained" that home. It is as far from mortal sight as when patriarchs **dramatised** their spiritual instincts, quitted fixed places of abode, and "**pitched their moving tents.**"

It is evident that this desire is not the **product of the imagination**—as perchance, some **gilded oriental fancy**, but springs from an instinct inherent in man—not contingent upon time or circumstance. In hall and in cot, in mansion and in hovel, in the palace of delights and the dungeon of horrors man has ever desired a **better environment.** Through all the varied course of the history of our race, this desire has been common in every circumstance and vital in every life. In the light it has rejoiced, in the darkness it has watched; the flood tides of **wealth** have not quenched nor the grip of **poverty** strangled it. . . . It may be colored or perverted, even degraded, but **die, it cannot**. . . . Discontent is innate, and is coincident with human consciousness. The moment the human mind opens its eyes it looks for more than it can see. . . . . **This is a wonderful world!** "So many glorious things are here" which engage the powers of the human mind. Many aspects of man's complex nature find their counterpart in his cradle world, and in many minor details man can be content with the ministry of earthly things, but the whole man comprehends a **great and glorious nature** for which these are insufficient. In many most important respects, man gives evidence that he is an **exotic.**

### THE AESTHETIC IDEAL.

(1) For instance, he has **an aesthetic instinct**, which looks for a more beautiful world than human eyes have ever seen beneath the sun. It must be confessed that this world is beautiful—in form and colour, light and shade, flower and landscape and over all the ethereal sky—so lovely and glorious that all language is bankrupt in its description, yet withal it is not equal to **man's conceptions of the beautiful and sublime**. Here for example is a flower—exquisite and lovely! No artist can portray its wonders of tint and tone. All the **painters' efforts** are—to use John Ruskin's word—"**extinguished**" beside the colouring of a **common flower**. But did you ever see a flower so lovely that you could not conceive of anything more beautiful? What is the meaning of the efforts of the florist—who perseveres with such care and labor? Is it not the quest of a more **perfect flower**—an attempt to make up Nature's inability to meet the calls of the **human ideal.** The fact is, that the flower has never yet blossomed which has been equal to man's ideal. F. W. Robertson, of Brighton, says: "There never was the beauty yet than which we could not conceive of something **more beautiful.**" Christina Rossetti says:—

> "Once in a dream I saw the flowers
> That bud and bloom in Paradise;
> More fair they are than waking eyes
> Have seen in all this world of ours,
> And faint the perfume-bearing rose,
> And faint the lily on its stem,
> And faint the perfect violet,
> Compared with them."

Rossetti's "dream" is not the phantom of a disordered mind but the **vision of the eye of the real man within**—the entity which lives and moves in a **fairer world.**

But it may be contended that this idealism is the result of culture and not native in man. Is it not the artist eye **which ever looks for the unseen beauty?** Whilst it is true that the aesthetic faculty requires **development** and the power to appreciate beauty may seem to be lost—even as the power to see may be lost if the eyes are not used, yet, if we study the human mind in its elemental simplicity, as for example, we find it in the little child, we shall discover an idealism unfolding itself with the opening bud of intelligence. Do not those "bright eyes full of wonder" ever look for some thing "**more pretty?**"

THE LITTLE CHILD AND THE WILD FLOWERS.

Did you ever take a **little child** into the country when it is decked in the fair robe of spring? The gay flowers, how wonderful they are to him! His very soul shines through his eyes as he plunges into the first plot of wild flowers—smiles back to the daisies and "dances with the daffodils." For a while he is lost in **the heaven of that one plot** but soon his eyes wander on and presently he runs to the next floral constellation—crying "**Look! Look!!**" Then anon to another and yet another—till his little feet weary and he takes refuge in his father's arms and by and bye—falls asleep on his **father's bosom**—with his hand still grasping the **harvest of his quest.** Is he not a type of our race—spending life's day in seeking a better land and, when their mortal powers fail—fall asleep in the bosom of the Eternal Father?

But let us take an example from actual life. One Sunday morning at the City Temple, London, the late Dr. Parker used a bunch of **lovely yellow flowers**—perhaps a cluster of the labernum—as a text for his usual address to the children. In the congregation was a **little boy—5 years of age**, if you please—sitting at his father's side—considered perhaps too young to learn anything in particular even from such a text. What he did learn we cannot tell, but the spell of the great preacher was evidently upon him, and on his way home he surprised his father by the question—"Father, does Dr. Parker love flowers." "Oh yes, Dr. Parker loves flowers." Then, after a pause, came the strange enquiry, "Could you get me a great long, long ladder?" "A great long ladder! What ever do you want that for?" "Oh, I want to climb up to the sky and gather a **bunch of the stars** for Dr. Parker!" . . Ovid, in his "Metamorphoses," describes man as "a being with form erect and face towards the stars"—and herein the poet and the little child are one. Verily, in man's quest for a more beautful world the "**little child shall lead him.**"

It is evident then that whilst the aesthetic faculty requires cultivation it is **not the creation of culture.** If men have not the eye for the ideal beauty it is not because it was not in their original make up but because **they have lost it.** In a word this faculty is latent in every man and no man can be fully developed without **an eye which looks for the unseen beauty.**

Passing from Nature's details to the wider view—from the flower to the landscape—let us come to some mountain scene—where Nature has lavished her wealth of beauty and displays her majestic grandeur. Here, as we stand among the

great mountains and those mighty altitudes rise around us all robed in Nature's royal garments and crowned with the fleecy clouds, our admiration is too great for words. Or as we contemplate some glorious sunset every descriptive word we know seems to **pale like a candle flame in the sunlight**.... Yet did you ever look upon a scene of such exquisite beauty or sublime grandeur that you could not conceive of something more lovely and more sublime. The fact is that human eyes have ever looked in vain for the magnificent grandeur of man's ideal scene. The Alps, the Andes, the Rockies, and the Himalayas all combined in one great mountain scene and crowned by a thousand sunsets would not equal the conceptions of the human mind. Our thoughts are superior to all the possibilities of beauty and grandeur in this earthly sphere. We look for a world yet "not seen" by mortal eyes.

### THE FINITE INADEQUATE.

(2) Then not only is this world inadequate as to **content** but also in **extent.** The human mind demands a **larger world.** Physically considered we are in comparison but infinitesimals, yet our mental powers demand the infinite. The fact is our thoughts cannot be limited by material conditions and our thoughts are the measure of what we are. As we contemplate the universe we cannot grasp the immensities of the astronomer's calculations stretching out as they do into thousands of millions of miles, and yet these computations have never reached a point at which **our thoughts can stop.** It is simply impossible for us to conceive of any point beyond which there is absolutely nothing. There is something within us—essential to our personality which ever cries—**"Beyond! What?"** F. W. Robertson declares that "there is a desire in the human heart best described as the **craving for infinitude.** We are so made that nothing that has limits satisfies." The fact is you can no more confine human thought within material limitations than you could **compass the ocean in a tea cup.** The essential nature of the mind of man requires an infinitely larger world than he finds as his present physical environment.

Time was when astronomers considered that the solar system of planets was bounded by the **orbit of Uranus** which was known to be 1700 millions of miles distant from the sun. But improved powers of observation discovered certain periodic movements in Uranus—called **"waverings"**—which led to the conclusion that there must be some great body beyond, which caused these variations. In 1846 a great planet, now known as Neptune was discovered a thousand millions of miles beyond the orbit of Uranus. Thus the mysterious "perturbations" of

Uranus were accounted for and the surmise of the astronomers proved to be correct. So there is something in man which affects his mental orbit and cannot be accounted for except by the assumption that he is meant to live and move in a sphere beyond all orbits—where material limitations are unknown. In a word, a spiritual sphere where finite conditions cease **to cramp the mind and oppress the soul**. Herein it is demonstrated that man has a spiritual nature—an entity that transcends **all material conditions** and cannot be construed in the terms of the finite.

### MAN HOMELESS.

(3) Then again man's **exotic character** is shown by his **desire for rest**. A rest that cannot be found beneath these changeful skies. Here rest is absolutely unknown. True it is, that we commonly speak of rest but it is only **comparative** rest. It is really one state of unrest being less restless than another. Everything in the make up of this world, when fully considered seems to indicate that it was not designed for a **home** but only for a **camping ground**.

It may be contended that an element of unrest for which the original plan was not responsible has been **obtruded** into the order of things and has destroyed our peace. Hence our unrest is rather incidental than essential in the nature of things. In a word it may be said that sin has somehow dislocated the order of the world and unrest is the result. Whilst it is quite true that there is evidence to show that man by the perverse exercise of his will has thrown himself **out of harmony with his environment** and is at cross purposes with the order of things—yet his unrest is more elemental than any condition that may be assumed as incidental upon human sin. There are indications no doubt that sin has aggravated man's unrest. We know that his transgression made him a **"fugitive and a vagabond on the earth."** But is it not also true that his **virtue** made him to realise that he was a **"pilgrim and a sojourner"**? Indeed has it not ever been a mark of moral deterioration when man has striven to make this earth his home—the end and purpose of his existence? When this has been his aim lower things have become ascendant and the world has become a sort of moral graveyard to him.

Then is there not also proof that before sin, as we know it, brought its dire results, man was **not "at rest."** According to the old primeval story of man's advent upon the earth, we have it that his mission was **"to subdue the earth"** which seems to indicate that this earth was meant to be a **battlefield** rather than a **home**. The earth would only yield her increase

as an enemy yields up his prey and man would only live by conquest. This condition of man's terrestrial existence is well in harmony with the nature of things—wherein we find everything is either contending or resisting. **To cease to fight is to suffer defeat** and revert to a lower order. As, for example when the heart ceases to beat the body "returns to its earth."

Turning again to that old story, we find that the Creator "**worked**" through His creation then "**rested.**" No matter what we may take those "days" to mean it is evident that the Creator did not rest **in** His creation but emerged from it into **His Sabbatic rest.** From this the Apostolic philosopher reasons that the creature is also meant to emerge from this life in the flesh into a "rest that remaineth."

### MAN MUST "MOVE ON."

But apart from all external revelation it is evident that this material sphere was never designed to be a place of rest—**man's home.** In fact a world wherein everything is evolving or developing, growing or decaying and **finality is unknown,** man can no more find rest than Noah's dove could "find rest for the sole of her foot" upon the wave-tossed flotsam of the flood. When everything around him is leading to something else man too must "**move on**" if he would be in harmony with his environment. Hence those who in the olden time "confessed"—(literally "**homologated,**"=agreed) that they were "pilgrims on the earth" had discovered the philosophy of life and harmonised their lives with its nature and purpose. **The laws of this world are "marching orders"** and to seek final rest here is to rebel against their mandate and find greater unrest. Yet man's inmost soul longs for **rest**—for **peace**—for **finality**—and in a world where this is unknown and impossible—he cannot find his home. Hence by the very law of his being he **must be a pilgrim** and cannot escape the conviction that he was made for a **better land**—a land larger and more beautiful than this earth—where there shall be "no more sea" of unrest and where he shall find room and rest—**a home for the whole man.**

CHAPTER V.

# The Only Sane Interpretation of Time's Deficit

"**He hath set eternity in their heart.**" "**Man. . . . is short of days. . . . and continueth not.**" Here we have the contrast between man's **desire** and his **experience.** A passion to live—"a rage to live" some one has called it—and a hunger for the **abiding** are in the heart of every man—

". . . For since our dying race began
"Ever, ever! and for ever, was the leading light
of man."

As in space he demands **infinitude** so in duration he demands **eternity.** No human mind can conceive of either a beginning or an end. We look backward and calculate in millions of years or in the aeons of the geologist—till we reach the dim past when all things were "without form and void" but we cannot conceive of a point in that eternal past beyond which **there was no duration.** On the other hand if we let our mind stretch out into the future—our thought can know no end. As one century or millennium or aeon **ends** another automatically and inevitably begins. Time measures serve us to denominate the passing periods—for comparisons and intermediate computations but they can bring us to **no** finality. The fact is an absolute **end is unthinkable.**

Besides this indubitable fact there are many indications that the human mind is **not amenable to the notation of any known chronology.** Take for example the faculty of **memory.** Does it not set at naught all time measures? The happenings of long ago, say of 50 or even 100 years since, do they not seem as fresh and near as the events of yesterday? In a moment our thought flies back over the decades as if they were nothing and the old scenes come before us..... Then we are young again.... Children away in the old home and, in a flash, the **angel faces** that smiled upon us in life's morn-

ing, look again into our very soul. We listen again to the **birds singing in the dawn** and the evening lullabies in soothing tones and sweet come across the years and, lo, the **touch of a mother's hand** is on our brow! Verily, that mysterious something which we call memory takes no account of time!

Again happy anticipations make time lose its meaning. Jacob loved Rachel so much that his **seven years** of service seemed as but "**a few days.**" On the other hand days of fear and anxiety stretch out their weary length as of ages. Our hair whitens in sympathy with our thought and emotion just as if **50 years** were crowded into **so many hours.** St. Peter's word concerning the Divine Being with whom "one day is as a thousand years and a thousand years as one day" has some applicability to man. Herein is a sign of the "divinity of man." It has been declared that "our thoughts wander up and down through eternity" and truly our mental powers refuse to accept any **time limits** and demand more than all that the terms of chronology can indicate.

Yet what greater contrast could be imagined than between these **demands** and our earthly **experience.** We hunger for **life—life without end** and yet we can only live one breath at a time. Our thoughts seek eternities but only one moment is ever really ours. In everything we assume a future. We buy and sell in terms of "**for ever.**" In our thought we assume that "all men are mortal **but ourselves.**" Yet absolute **power of tenure** is unknown beneath the sun. The great and the rich have offered "millions for moments" in vain. No resources within the range of human knowledge can purchase the lease of a minute.

Then does it not seem to us that the things most worthy to abide are the most fleeting. Look for example at earth's **most beautiful things.** We were speaking in a former discussion of the wonderful loveliness of a common flower. The more closely we examine it, the more searching the light, the more perfect its beauties appear. But, lo! while we explore its wonders of form and color—it fades, it withers and—vanishes! That fading flower! How typical of the things of this mortal state! Does it not also seem that the things most precious in our eyes are the most frail and least abiding. The tendrils of our affections—indeed all that is best in us—bind them to our hearts, but in a moment they are gone. . . . . And all our helpless grief can say is "Earth to earth, ashes to ashes"! Verily if there be no "**far off interest of tears**"—this life is but a cruel mockery.

### CAN THE CREATOR BE A HEARTLESS MONSTER?

No! it cannot be that He who made man to love, only forged the links of affection and welded them as bonds stronger than life, that with cruel hands He might break them. This would surely mean that He who made the human heart with all its refined and exquisite tenderness is himself a heartless monster. Rather may we not conclude without the shadow of a doubt that man's experiences are not less explicable than the seasons of this material sphere. And as winter's blast and blight prepare for the spring so must the springtime of renewal follow the winter of the heart's bereavement. As when the flowers fade and the autumn leaves begin to fall the bird turns its eyes to the Sunny North (in Australia) and, led by an instinct, as real as the eye which sees the sun, wings its way across continents and seas till it finds the spring and renews its song, so the noble instinct within us which looks through tear dimmed eyes for a land "where everlasting spring abides and never withering flower" cannot be disappointed. To the little child the horizon is the end of the world, but when he climbs the hills he discovers that the sky is as far away as ever. It is ever so in the economy of our environment. The seeming "end" is only a new beginning. Nothing goes out of existence, only changes. All endings are but illusions. They are only new beginnings. Even so the seeming end of death is only an illusion. Death does not—cannot end but only changes. By and bye when we pass these mortal horizons we shall discover that what seemed an end was but the beginning. Our way hath many changes—strange and tragic—but no end. All changes are beginnings. Life's business is to begin. This is man's momentous task. He need ask no more. He who begins aright may leave the issue and with glad heart may sing

"I go to prove my soul.
I see my way as birds the trackless way.
I shall arrive! What time, what circuit first;
I ask not; but. . . . . .
In good time, His good time I shall arrive—
He guides me and the bird—in His good time."

CHAPTER VI.

# Why Knowledge Knows No Finality

"**Now I know in part; but then shall I know fully.**"

There is a "**now**" and a "**then**" in all our knowledge. The "now" is ever leading to the "then." All our knowing leads to further knowledge. There is no finality—every ending becomes a beginning. The "sum of human knowledge" has never been computed nor can any notation be found for its statement. **It grows as the ages multiply.** There are always lengths and breadths beyond, heights above and depths beneath. . . . . Everything holds its secret. We know **everything** about **nothing.** "If any man thinketh he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know it"—is sound dictum. We know a world about things. Our wisdom walks round the circumference and we can survey the surface. Our insight can analyse, classify and designate with wonderful accuracy but when we are asked what these things really **are** we have no answer. There is, so to speak, a darkness within everything which no X-rays can penetrate. The greater our light the more evident becomes the darkness. The most we can know is our own ignorance. It has been well said that we seem to search a little strip of shore with the great depths of the mighty ocean ever hidden from our view. The contrast between our knowledge and our ignorance is so great that one has exclaimed, "behold we know not anything."

Yet man was **born to know**. There is nothing more certain than that this is a fact. The mind craves for knowledge even as the stomach craves for food. You may call it by what so ever name you choose—such as curiosity or inquisitiveness and you may laugh at its vagaries. The absurdity of the boy who cut open the bellows to see where the wind came from; the folly of the Athenians who spent their time in seeking to hear some new thing, or the vanity of the "wise man" who set himself

"to behold wisdom and madness and folly." But they all point to the fact that man has an instinct for knowledge. He is a child of the light and darkness is alien to him.

"An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry."

As the eye is designed for light, so the mind is made for knowledge. We rebel against ignorance as Nature revolts against a vacuum.

### HUNGER FOR KNOWLEDGE AND SIN.

Man's first sin is said to have been a yielding to the temptation to partake of the "tree of the knowledge of good and evil." In other words man's hunger for that particular knowledge was so great that it lead him to disobey and sin. This story may be put down by some as a legend, but it clothes a profound truth. It shows man climbing up to God by the wrong way. Herein we have exhibited the fact that evil is ever perverted good. They strove to ascend and become "as gods" by the way of knowledge, whereas the true ascent is by the way of love. "Knowledge puffeth up but love buildeth up." In the way of knowledge men strive to be as God in order that, as they assume, they may do without Him but in the way of love men strive to be like God that they may have fellowship with Him and that they may realise that He is their great necessity. Hence we can see how the way of this forbidden knowledge lead to the great estrangement and all our woe.

However, be this as it may, every man in his hunger for knowledge bears the marks of a parentage like unto that in the old Genesis story. It is a demand of his very life to know. We never weary of seeing and hearing; physically we may flag, and call a halt in the pursuit of knowledge, but mentally we can never know enough. Knowledge is never per se a burden to man. No matter how vast the harvest he gathers, his barns have ever room for more. We seek and ever seek a perfect knowledge which forever lies beyond our reach. If there be no perfect life, man must be the victim of

### A MERE MIRAGE

for "there is no knowledge in the grave." "The wise man dieth as the fool." Sir Isaac Newton is of no more account in the finish than the "infant of a span"—except in the matter of a few pounds of dust. If death ends all, then man's great necessity means nothing. Can such an absurdity be credible?

CHAPTER VII.

# Material Conditions Man's Prison

"The earnest expectation of the Creature waiteth . . . . . the glorious liberty of the Children of God."—St. Paul.

"Rejoice . . . ye prisoners of hope."—Zech.

Man is a prisoner—**a prisoner ever seeking to escape.** He is born to be free and lives for liberty—a liberty he is never able to enjoy. He has, it is true, a measure of liberty but the **liberty** he seeks is **without measure.**

A **caged eagle**, though his cage be comparatively spacious —is a **pathetic sight.** Those great loose wings which seem an encumbrance and those wild eyes which peer out into the sky—call for a larger world and ever protest against the limitations of his cage. So there is ever something in man—describe it how you may—which looks out beyond and longs instinctively for an exercise of his powers which he has never known. **Man is a prisoner within himself.** The powers of the mind are subject to limitations more adamantine than any material prison walls.

In our common speech we speak of one "expressing himself"—the man within, so to speak, coming forth. The phrase seems to suggest difficulty—as if some compulsion were necessary to "**press out**" the thoughts by which the inward man emerges. It is true that much may emerge by various avenues but there is a **world within** every man which can never find a way out. There is a self within—a personality which ever vainly **seeks a larger world.**

This sense of our limitations is realised very early in life. How often we have played upon it in a little child. When his bright eyes look into ours and he declares his love for us —how we delight to test the powers of those feet which are just learning to travel the path of expression. So we say "How **much** do you love me?" "Oh, **so** much!" comes the answer. But you query still—"Yes, but **how** much?" Then a puzzled look creeps into those beaming eyes. It is the **look**

of the prisoner! And then the little hands stretch out as wide as they can reach and he exclaims, "Oh, this much!" Meaning that his love is equal to his fullest capacity but how much he cannot tell. The child hopes that when he grows to be a man he will be able to pour forth the full measure of his heart but he never does, and has to discover that the man who loves must, to a very large extent, remain within and be the "hidden man of the heart"—"the unpublished self." Yet is it not the very genius of love to express itself? As the rosebud is designed to open its heart to the sun so the instinct of love is to unfold itself to another heart. But the "half has never been told." Herein we see that man's noblest power finds its earthly condition utterly inadequate.

Our joys, too, are they not "unspeakable"? Then who can tell his sorrows?

> "I sometimes hold it half a sin
> To put in words the grief I feel;
> For words, like nature, half reveal
> And half conceal the soul within."

Then too the words have yet to be found with which to express our supreme admiration. Neither can we look our scorn nor utter our contempt. For 2000 years men have been striving in vain to utter their heart's adoring admiration for Him who loved even to the Cross and had only love and prayer for the men who drove the nails into His hands and feet. On the other hand no language has ever furnished words strong enough to express the abhorrence of the centuries for the Betrayer.

The more we consider it the more evident it becomes to us that much of human thought must ever remain inarticulate. No language can soar to its heights or fathom its depths. As we think the storm of emotion rages, the heavens flame with light, thunders peal and boom; but we can but stand in silent awe; as we meditate, seraphic choirs sing their hallelujah choruses, and, as if touched by angel hands "harps of gold resound" and unseen organs burst forth in diapason melodies and all the heavens reverberate and thrill our soul—yet all we can utter seem less than faint echoes. Truly there is a man within which is greater and grander than can be shown through the medium of his fleshly powers.

It is related that a peal of bells was once hung in a cathedral tower at great cost. After the bells, with all their splendid capacities to thrill the hearts of the community near

and far, had been duly installed it was discovered that through some mistake the tower was not strong enough to bear the vibration involved in their ringing. So that the **lovely music** of which those bells were capable had to remain inarticulate—**buried as it were within their hearts.** Even so the powers of man are unable to find scope for their possibilities. Is it not reasonable to anticipate that as, no doubt those bells were removed to some tower strong enough to give their music a chance to come forth, so He who made the human mind with all its powers will not fail in due season to provide a sphere for its full play. These are but **temporary premises** we occupy now and cannot possibly be **the final structure for the housing of the faculties of the human mind.**

CHAPTER VIII.

# Why Man's Doing Powers are Never Exhausted

**"I have seen all the works that are done under the sun. . . . and behold that which is wanting—"** This ancient writer goes on to say that what is wanting "cannot be numbered" but the omission of the closing words of the sentence seems to bring out more clearly the thought that is in his mind. What he is most conscious of is that wherein the "works" of man **come short.** It is the deficiency that looms large in his outlook. All the works of men lacked completion; none of them gave entire satisfaction and it is a "vexation" unto him. In this lament the Preacher proves his genius and speaks for all the race. As he tells us, it is indeed the **"sore travail"** which is "given unto the sons of men to be exercised therewith." Does not every man desire to accomplish something that will be entirely satisfactory? This no one has ever been able to do. Yet the universal failure has not quenched the desire. The fact is it is an instinct born in him and he cannot do otherwise. It enters into the very genius of man. His "real" is never his "ideal." Does he not begin life in dream? His world—a fairy land. His man an imaginary—a fabulous giant. His woman an angelic fairy. His architecture "Castles in the Air." We may ridicule the incoherent fancies of youth and make merry over his vain conceits but they point to depths within and heights above—to the divinity in man. It is the **"spirit in him that goeth upward"** and he is learning the way amid much blundering and many stumblings.

We can be content with many things as merely provisional. 'Our little systems which have their day' may obsess the mind for the passing moment but, that they will "cease to be" is ever in our subconsciousness.

The archaeologist may put the **"Tower of Babel"** down as a legend but it is the tower we are all building. We set

out to "**build up to heaven**" but anon our "bricks" fail and —earth returns to earth. Every one has a different "heaven" in view and various are the bricks with which we build. The earth is full of the babel tongues of the builders. Each man builds his tower but no one has ever finished the structure. No searching has ever discovered the "headstone thereof." It may be the sordid quest for wealth—"to build up a fortune" may be his ambition. Here multi-millions do not reach finality. The millionaire is as eager for gain as the beggar and in the end he is no richer. "He brought nothing into this world and he can take nothing out." "Vanity of vanities! All is vanity!" is his tragic verdict.

Or he may rise to a nobler purpose and put his soul into art. But the more worthy the "calling" the less satisfied is he. The very instinct of the artist is to labour for the unattained. All true artists are of the order of Michael Angelo whose purpose was "to endeavor to create **something perfect.**" This no one has ever accomplished. The painter never paints his ideal—his eye ever looks for the "**unseen beauty.**"

An artist was once found weeping before a fine picture—the fruit of his labor. He was asked why he wept? "Because," said he, "**I am no longer an artist.**" "Why? No longer an artist! Is not this picture a proof that you are a master in your art?" "Oh!" he said with great pathos, "I am no longer an artist because I cannot conceive of anything **beyond what I have painted.**" The vision had failed and he felt as if the artist had passed with its departed glory. But the fact was that, though he did not know it, those tears of noble grief were but the proof that he had the artist genius. He felt in his soul that there was a glory beyond but he could not see it—hence his grief. **The better a man's work, the more he seeks the best.**

The musician ever listens for the melody he **never hears.** The quest of the "**lost chord**" is in every ear, and a multitude, whom no man can number, in all lands, awaits the "**new song.**"

The book is yet to be written which entirely satisfies its author. Here, in the reader's hand, is an example. Does not every true poet fault all his work? Some cadence in the rhythm which offends his ear, some travail in the verses which fails to bring forth his thought. Victor Hugo, at the end of his life, said, "**For half a century** I have been writing my thoughts in prose and verse—history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song—I have tried all, but I feel that I have not said a **thousandth part of what is in me.**"

Such testimonies as these abound, and many could be given. Let two, from points far apart, suffice. Lord Kelvin said recently, "There is **one word** which characterises all my efforts for the advancement of science, and that word is **'failure.'** " Then listen to the words of Cecil Rhodes, after a life of strenuous activity and remarkable achievement, when he lay dying, said, "**So little done, so much to do.**" These pathetic words of the man of science and the man of affairs are typical and indicate that man at most can do but "**little,**" and the "**much**" he would do must be **left undone**. No man has ever been able to say, when he laid his head down amid the shadows of life's evening, "I have finished my day's work" —all that he wanted to do, or all he ought to have done. It is ever true that the man who has accomplished most is most conscious of the incompleteness of his work. This is not only so in the case of the **exceptional man**—the idealist—but it is the **general rule.** This universal consciousness of incompleted work, of unexhausted doing-powers—proclaims as with the **voices of all the race**—that there **must** be a life beyond, where

"We'll catch the broken threads again,
And **finish what we here began.**"

CHAPTER IX.

# The Philosophy of Disappointment

"**Expectation. . . . waiteth. . . . in hope.**" Thus it was written two millenniums ago, and still **expectation waiteth** in every heart, and **hope watcheth** in every eye. Hope is the **eye** of expectation, and life has no other light. "**We are saved by hope.**" Apart from hope, man has no reason to live. In fact, human life is not possible without hope. Unless **hope** "**abides,**" our **race departs.** Hope, then, is essential to this earthly life. Man is made to hope as a **seed is made to grow**. To fulfil its purpose, the seed must be planted in the earth. Now, down there in the dark earth there is something in the seed which in its very nature **must seek the light**. That something we call life, and, in obeying the impulse of that vital energy, it strikes upward for the surface, and is thus saved from destruction. It is even so with the human soul. In this material condition, veiled in dark mystery, there is something within us which looks above and beyond—for the unveiling light. This we call hope—by which we are "**redeemed from destruction.**" Now here the question emerges: "Is human hope fulfilled in this mortal life?" The answer is an undoubted negative. Life is too short for hope's fruition. Many hopes, it is true, are not in vain, but more never come to fruitage. It has been well said that man is born with large hopes, and dies with larger disappointments. It must, of course, be allowed that in the economy of human life, many hopes are better unrealised. When the **flower of the weed** perishes in the bud, no one laments. So when ignorant or unworthy hopes are disappointed, it does not detract from life's purpose. But is it not also true that our best and noblest hopes never come to fruition? It is a tragic fact that the **nobler the man, the more disappointed he is.** Indeed, a man may be said to be **noble, just in proportion as he is disappointed.**

Again, not only are our noblest hopes disappointed, but also those we most passionately cherish. Hopes dear to our hearts as life itself—fair buds of promise in the garden of the

soul, which only **promise**, and—then—**crumble into dust**. Some years ago we saw in a country cemetery an inscription which suggested a world of pathos. It was, "**Sacred to the memory**" of two boys. Inscribed first was the name of the younger, aged two, followed by the elder, aged five, who died later; and then beneath, in deeply cut letters, were these poignant words "**Many hopes lie buried here.**" . . . How much of every life could be placed beneath these words? . . . The paths of all our lives are **marked by the grave mounds of buried hopes**. Some of them, in time, the grass may hide in forgetfulness, but upon others the hot breath of our sorrow will never suffer the kindly grass to grow.

But whence has man the **right to feel disappointed?** What authority has he to expect so much? **Who** made him the promises implied in his hopes? Why, this pervading **sense of deprivation**, and this **revolt** against the final loss of all things? No man ever brought anything into this world, and why should he lament when he is denied what he desires or loses what he gains, and, finally suffers the loss of all things? Only mocking echoes seem to answer these questions. . . . But we are confronted by the fact that man is made to hope, and cannot do otherwise.

HE CANNOT LIVE, AND BE A MAN

without hoping—yea, hoping above and beyond all that is possible in this earthly life. If there be no life beyond the grave, then we are forced to the conclusion that He who made man thus must bear the reproach of the builder of old, who "began to build and was unable to finish." Man is an unfulfilled promise, and "if in this life only we have hope," and all must dissolve in oblivion, our hope cannot be anything but the phantom of a fool. Alas, that everything should end in final and utter disappointment! and life only produce food for "the worm, the canker, and the grief!" Nay! it cannot be that all these promises writ so plainly in the necessities of human thought are lies, and life is only meant to deceive! But rather it must be that the **promise**, evident in all things, shall be **made good**, and when our life, in its length and breadth, is "**redeemed from destruction,**" every sincere and legitimate hope of the soul shall come to fruition—somewhere or somewhen. The buds of promise were made to blossom, and every winter must change to summer.

"And all is well, though faith and form
Be sundered in the night of fear;
Well roars the storm to those who hear
A deeper voice across the storm."

CHAPTER X.

# An Adequate Purpose Ever Sought But Never Found

"**Wherefore hast Thou made us thus?**" This was originally a profane question, because it implied a reflection upon the Creator. But if made reverently, there is a legitimate place for **such an enquiry**. Behind the demand of this question there is an instinct which is inherent in man. Man is a **born logician.** The beginning of his intelligence is the **dawn of reason.** He looks instinctively for the reason of things. Long before his tongue can shape a word or his hand can form a pothook his eyes look many a question mark. The incipient puzzle in the infant mind runs through the whole of human life. It is simply not possible for the mind to conceive of anything absolutely without a purpose. Man cannot accept the **hypothesis that he came from nowhere, and goes nowhere.** That he has no **whence** and no **whither.** In a word, that in the end his life means nothing. In the **cry** of infancy, in the **passion** of youth, in the **sigh** of maturity, in the **groan** of old age, in the **agony** of death—humanity demands a **reason for things.** Yet nothing is fully—even nearly—accounted for or explained. The whole Creation waits to be interpreted. It has been declared that "nothing walks with aimless feet." But who can discover the whither of the course? The interim purposes of life may be evident, but its ultimate aim is lost in the haze of the unknown. Unless there be a part of our path beyond our mortal outlook, there is no adequate reason for our existence—that is, if human reason counts for anything. Take, for example, the **discipline of life** —its self-renunciation, its perseverance in well-doing, its numberless privations, without which the best qualities in human nature cannot be developed—all this would be a cruel mockery if the last word were—"earth to earth."

### SCOTCH BLEACHERS IN QUEENSLAND.

When in Queensland a few years ago, I met two men who had come out from Scotland. They were linen-bleachers by trade, but they found no such occupation in Australia. Though they appeared to be experts in their line of work, they found themselves reduced to common unskilled laborers in this new land. All their learning and training served next to no purpose. Now, is the whole of life's development to have a more tantalising result even than this? Is the whole of man's life to be exhausted in learning **how to do**, and then to have **nothing to do?**
Let us give another illustration: In one of the salons of France there is a statue, which has a tragic history. The artist who produced it was a man of genius, but, like many another, was very poor and occupied a garret-room, which served as studio and dormitory. Here he labored long, amidst many privations to express his soul in this piece of work. When the statue was near completion and the dream of a lifetime was about to be realised, he awoke one night to find that a sudden frost had fallen upon Paris. He knew that the water in the moist clay was in danger of being frozen, and all his work destroyed. So he rose from his bed, and wrapped the bed clothes around his precious work. Next morning there was no sound to be heard in the attic, and when they went up to see what had happened, they found the artist lying dead—frozen to death, but the statue unharmed. The artist had **laid down his life to save his life's work.** Now, whilst it is true that this heroic soul has added to the world's treasures of beauty and that statue, as it stands yonder, is of great value, yet the question forces itself upon our mind: **What of the artist himself?** The mind that conceived, the eye which caught the vision, and the deft hand that obeyed the imperial calls of the will—what of these? Are those few bones and that hideous skull in yonder tomb all that's left of the artist? He lived and sacrificed his all—even died for the beautiful—and can it be that all that remains of him is this **repulsive ugliness?** Our deepest sense of the reasonableness of things revolts against such a conclusion.

### WORKS OF ART UPON THE SAND.

When in the Northern State, we used to visit a sea-side town where there was a delightful beach. The sand was very fine, and so flat that the tide receded very quickly and left a large area of firm and smooth surface upon which hundreds of children amused themselves. A little skill could form many

interesting things, which, for a while, delighted the young folks, till the tide returned and left not a trace of the juvenile "works of art." This was a pleasant amusement for the children's holiday. But suppose some master sculptor were to come along with the instruments of his art, set to work, and with a few magic touches, cause forms of beauty to take shape and look forth from that sandy shore. For a while we would watch and applaud his efforts. But suppose that, day after day, till days grew into weeks and months, that artist were to come and repeat his work, and as often the returning tide left not a form or mark behind? What would we think of such a man who thus spent his time and skill to accomplish no abiding result? Would we not consider him mad, and needed to be protected from himself? But what if we can draw a parallel between the operations of that insane artist and the process of the history of our race? For millenniums generation has followed generation—each stayed their day and then the tide of death has swept them all away, leaving for the most part only a few ruins to mark their age. It may be contended that each generation leaves some heritage for the next, and so has not been in vain. But what must be said when it is discovered that we live in a perishing world, and that the whole creation moves towards that void which is to be "strewn with the wrecks of worn-out worlds"—where the tide of death shall leave less than escaped the foaming waves on that northern sea shore. We dare not write down the conclusion! And yet there is no other deduction possible if death ends all, and everything is made to be unmade, and the product of the mighty travail of the ages is—a cypher.

CHAPTER XI.

# The Universal Default Consummate in Man

**O wretched man, that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?** In the light of the context we may render this passage, "Who shall deliver me **from myself?**" This is a strong expression of a man's dissatisfaction with himself, and it may be taken as an exceptional case. Yet, in essence, it is typical. For no one in the course of this mortal life has ever been satisfied with himself. The child wants to be a man, and the man wants to be a god. It is even so from the cradle to the grave. No matter how long he lives, he is never all he wants to be, and when he dies, the tragic "might have been" is in his heart. No one has ever, in his own estimation, arrived at **completion.** "**Man,**" says Dr. Momerie, **is the incompletest thing on earth.** All else—star, ocean, mountain, bird, beast, insect—has a certain perfection. It fits into its own place; it gives no hint that it might have been other than it is. But not so with man. . . . . Which of us has reached the plenitude of his mental or moral capabilities? . . . . The average lion is a type of lionhood, but where will you find the man who is the type of manhood? Why, even the saint, the philanthropist, the hero, the thinker—each of these does but represent a single phase of the all-round, full-orbed, ideal man."

The failure of all things seems to be focussed in man, and he has an instinctive consciousness of it. It may be contended that this consciousness of short-coming is not natural, but artificial—the result of discipline, the product of ages of moral culture. It is true that whole races of men have **deteriorated,** and become so degraded that they have seemed to lose the moral sense, and may be regarded as devoid of anything worthy of being called a **conscience.** Yet down beneath the apparent inert moral insensibility there is an unrest—an inarticulate better man struggling to live. Even those

"wild eyes" of the savage bespeak more than brutish ferosity. But, be this as it may, our argument is **not from the worst, but from the best**. We are not looking for something beneath, but above. We do not get a fair judgment of the race **physically**, from some sallow anaemic man, nor gauge humanity mentally from some imbecile, no more can we judge the moral significance of man by some swinish sot or demonised cannibal. The fact that some men appear to have lost the moral sense and are blind to right and wrong, as we know these moral antitheses, and, withal, seem to have no desire to be better men or rise above the animal—does not affect our present contention. For the fact is, no matter how degraded man may become, he **never has a desire or a reasoned intention to become more degraded**. Such a desideratum is an unknown motive.

A lecturer once gave a noble address upon the homely topic of "**getting up stairs**." At the close, the chairman facetiously remarked that the lecturer had told them how to get **up stairs**, but not how to **get down again**. Speaking, of course, metaphorically, **no man** has ever needed to be told that, nor, mark you, has any one ever asked for such a direction. While man may seem to have absolutely no desire to be nobler, yet we think it is absolutely true that no one has **a real desire to be more degraded**. On the other hand, and this is our point, the **nobler a man is, the more he desires and seeks after nobility of character**. The **better** a man is, the more he longs to be the **best** possible. **It is never otherwise.**

Furthermore, is it not a rule absolutely without an exception, that the more a man is what he ought to be, the more conscious he is of his short-comings? **The holy ever to the holiest leads**, and the further on the way, the more distant seems the goal. The more perfect a man is, the further from perfection he seems to himself to be. Take, for example, when a man has "added love" to his graces. The **perfect man** will **love perfectly**. Now, is it not a fact that the man who loves most and best has the greatest sense of his own unworthiness? In proportion as we love we shall regard ourselves in particular, as **unworthy of being loved**. It is well said that when "love took up the harp of life . . . . self passed in music out of sight"—self fell into the background, as if unworthy to appear. Herein is explained the humility and **self-loathing of all the saints**.

Still further, is not this sense of moral imperfection not only universal as a characteristic of goodness, but also the **essential condition** of all moral excellence. The moment a man

is content with himself, he suffers moral depreciation. For just so far as he is **self-satisfied**, he will be **proud**, and pride is essentially superficial and hypocritical. Just as exercise is necessary to keep the body in health, to save it from stagnation, torpor and decay, so "pressing on" is essential to maintain the graces of a noble character.

> "I held it truth with him who sings
> To one clear harp in divers tones,
> That men may rise on stepping stones
> **Of their dead selves to higher things.**"

Or, as another has put it:

> "Unless above himself he can
> Erect himself, how poor a thing is man?"

Goodness can have no self-complacency. Discontent with self is ever the sign of moral worth, and the criterion of holiness. If it were otherwise, and self-satisfaction were the sign of perfection, then the moral significance of life would be of no account, and it is easy to see the absurdity into which it would lead us. For then the most self-satisfied animal would be the most perfect, and our **quest for perfection** would, perchance, lead us to the **swine trough!** Man must blot out his conscience before he can make the brute his ideal, or he can be content with the swinish maxim, "Let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die." No! if man is to be anything more than a brute beast, he must have a "**divine discontent.**"

### THE INEVITABLE DEDUCTION.

Now let us see **whither** this essential of all goodness—this quest of the better man—leads us. We have seen that that in man which lifts him above the brute creation—that which makes him man—never has been satisfied, and indeed, **cannot be satisfied.** Just as that in man which we call the stomach craves for food, so that in man we designate the conscience, calls for a holier, nobler life, but with this distinctive difference that whilst food can allay the cravings of hunger, no attainment—no increment of virtue—can silence the calls of conscience. Rather, the more these demands are obeyed, the more clamant they become. Of the hungering and thirsting after righteousness, there is no end. It is inevitable and insatiable, because this hunger ever **grows by what it is fed.** All the graces of moral excellence demand progress—**every right feeling seeks to be more intense, and no finality is possible. There is no last word in character.** Here, then, we are confronted by the fact that the implications of the moral nature connote and anticipate a future life. The character of man is evidently

designed for endless development. Its heights ever call to higher heights.

Some years ago, when visiting one of our wheat-producing districts, we noticed three machines in a shed awaiting the harvest, which was at hand. Two of them, the "reaper" and the "stripper," we knew, but the third, which was of far more complex construction, was not familiar to us. Enquiry elicited the information that it was called "the harvester"—one of the latest inventions, and was designed not only to reap and thresh the wheat, as the "stripper" was capable of doing, but also at the same time to winnow and bag the grain ready for market. In short, it was meant to do more complete work than the other machines, and its **structure gave very marked evidence of the fact.** According to the farmer's report, on smooth fields it accomplished its purpose, but in rough country it was found to be too cumbersome, and was not a success. Now the design and purpose of the human structure is as evident as was the design of that machine. Man is designed to produce results in character unknown in this material existence, and is awaiting conditions which will furnish opportunities to make good his purpose.

Now, can we possibly imagine that any sane man would take the pains to invent and to construct "The Harvester" we have referred to if he knew that it would have no opportunity to accomplish the results for which it was designed. No more can we conceive of the Great Designer and Creator of man constructing him with infinitely more complexity and ingenuity than any work of man, and developing with unnumbered instrumental influences through the divers workings of this life if He knew that his **plan and purpose would all be in vain.**

A man once wanted a vehicle for a particular purpose, and gave instructions to a coachbuilder for its construction. As it was in course of building he frequently called to notice its progress, and, being over-zealous to have a strong conveyance, kept asking the builders to make the parts "heavier," which they did, contrary to their better informed judgment. By and bye the vehicle was completed, and found to be too cumbersome for its purpose. The last we heard of it was that it stood in a corner of its owner's yard, a **constant witness to his folly.** Now, the question presents itself: Can we aver that the highest and most wonderful **product of the Creator** is only and finally to be a **proof of His folly?** No, we say it is impossible. Common sense compells us to connote a future life. **It is not merely a theological dogma, but the inevitable conclusion of mental sanity.**

CHAPTER XII.

# Man's Supreme Need: Perfect Fellowship. A Present Impossibility

**"Oh, that I knew where I might find him!"—Job.**
**"I beseech Thee show me Thy glory!"—Moses.**

These cries emanate from **two extremes** of human experience. The one from the valley of humiliation, is uttered by a man in helpless suffering and desolate bereavement. Yonder, Job sits amongst the ashes, covered with sores, bereft of his children, forsaken by his wife and misunderstood by his friends. Out of the depths he calls for One who was more than man, who could understand the problems of his life, and enter into the heart of his sorrow. The ash heap might find a rest for his tortured body, and even a potsherd might mollify his sores, but, alas, to solace his desolate heart, there was none to be found.

The other passionate cry is the inspiration of a moment of supreme exaltation. As Moses stood upon the Mount of God and conversed with the Great Unseen, whose name he dared not take upon his lips, he realised **so much** of what He was, that he pleaded for a **full revelation.**

Now, these cries for **nearness and vision** are typical. The one is from the depths, the other from the heights, and between the two are the voices of an innumerable host—the voices of every heart of man—which proclaim man's **need of fellowship**. **Every man's structure demands a counterpart**. Man has a **social instinct.** He is made, not only for himself, but for another. It may be thought of lightly, as if it were artificial and superfluous; but, that fellowship is **essential**, is a fact. As a bird cannot fly with one wing, no more can man stand **alone.** Love cannot live without someone to love, and **without love, what is man?** Indeed it is the touch of fellowship which **makes him man.** Apart from fellow-

ship, life has no purpose. Man has no reason to live. Man, without relationship, is not possible, and **absolute loneliness is death**. If anyone thinks this an exaggeration, let him try a short term in solitary confinement, and he will discover that it means **mental death**.

PERFECT FELLOWSHIP DEMANDED.

Now, not only is fellowship essential to man, but there is something in him that seeks for a **perfect fellowship**. Animals are gregarious, and association may even be essential to their life, but they are **content** with the companionship they find in one another. Not so with **man**. His grace of love gives him a higher and unique necessity. For is it not the essential **nature of love** to seek a fellowship wherein there is a **perfect communion**? Love's **eye** seeks a cloudless vision, and the heart seeks to away with all go-betweens "Show me Thy glory," is the inward man of the heart speaking. Moses had seen much, and heard more, but it was not enough. There was something hidden—nothing but a full-face view would suffice. It is a **perfect fellowship**—a **complete communion**, that he seeks. But this is only possible between **perfect beings**. For it requires personalities that are perfectly conscious of one another, but man cannot be perfectly conscious of anything. His fleshly nature limits his consciousness, and barriers the intimacy.

There is a **color in the light** that the eye hath not seen. There is a **tone in the voice** that the ear cannot perceive, which knocks in vain for admission to the auditorium of the mind. There is a **fire in love** that has never kindled another's heart. Human powers of perception are ever **limited**, and the light of our knowledge, **partial**. The veil of this fleshly embodiment must be removed ere there can be any perfect intercourse. Hence our fellowship, in the meantime, must remain incomplete. Our loneliness must abide until the "dimness is done away." In a word, the fellowship which our social nature demands, can only be realised in a more perfect state than this earthly life. In this mortal state **all things are mediated**, but man seeks an experience **without mediation**, which must of necessity take him beyond his material conditions.

In the days of primeval simplicity, Enoch arrived hither and emerged. "He **walked** with God," and, it is immediately added, "**was not, for God took him.**" It could not be otherwise. The comment of one of the Fathers upon this incident is not only beautiful, but profoundly true. He says that, "Enoch walked with God, and one day went so far that

it was too far to come back." He attained the fellowship which **changed "the thorny path into the golden street."** It was simply a natural and necessary result. For it is written, "No man can see God and live." That is the bodily life. The vision means translation. It may be that this was the original plan of transition—"from out our bourne of time and place." That when this earthly life has achieved its purpose and attained its measure of the knowledge of God for its earthly way to merge into the heavenly Zion.

Be this as it may, nothing is more certain than that man's personality is so constituted as to demand a **personal fellowship** involving a communion, which is not possible under his present fleshly conditions. As a man progresses in the "walk" of his life, and **the more perfect** he becomes, **the more lonely** he is, and calls ever more for a fellowship that is not possible to mortals. This rule has no exception, and postulates another —a more perfect life—a life wherein **we shall see our divine, our perfect Comrade, face to face, and be like Him.**

CHAPTER XIII.

# The Questions which Emerge

## 1. "WHAT SHALL WE SAY TO THESE THINGS?"

These **potentialities** in man, which, though latent, are real; these ineradicable **characteristics** which desire and aspire beyond all the possibilities of his earthly experience; these **eyes**, which look for the "vision splendid" not seen beneath the sun; these **peerings** into the illimitable; these **gropings** in the dark mystery of things; these **cryings** for the "light that never was on land or sea"; these **struggles to ascend** the path which the eye of the eagle hath not seen; these **hands** stretched out as the tendrils of the soul that fain would grasp some power beyond the stars; these **strivings** for the impossible; these **groanings** of a travail that has never brought to the birth; these **social instincts** which demand a fellowship—a communion such as mortal man can neither give nor reciprocate; this **love** which would fain sweep away all the barriers of fleshly conditions, exceed all limitations, and **give more than heaven and earth contain**; this passion for **life**, which can do no other than assume "that man was made to grow and not stop," and that, finally, summons all that is strongest and best in him—all that makes him man—in **revolt** against the "**last enemy.**" All these characteristics, evident in man, **must have some reasonable significance.**

We regard them as none other than **prophetic**, and proclaim as with many and varied voices—**a life to come**—yea, "**Life for evermore.**" Now are we to aver that these are the voices of **false** prophets—like the prophets of Baal, to whom there was no answer, save the echo of their own hoarse ravings? In other words, are we to say that these signs in man are utterly delusive? Are they only worthy to be **mocked**, as Elijah mocked the clamant "prophesyings" of the prophets of Baal? Or are we to say that they are mere phantoms and mean nothing at all? If this be so, then there are several questions which demand an answer.

### INEVITABLE ENQUIRIES.

We may perhaps notice two or three of these inevitable enquiries. By what parity of reasoning can we conclude that while the prophetic signs in the lower orders of creation are so **generally true**, that they may be taken as **infallible** indications of subsequent development, yet, when we come to the highest order of being—the product of the same creative mind and hand—prognostic signs are to be regarded as **utterly delusive?** For example, the seed is prophetic of the plant. The plant demands a much larger and more diversified world than the seed. What do we find? That when the vital germ shoots up through the earth and emerges upon the surface, it finds a sphere wherein the development of its **latent potentialities is possible.** Here, on the other hand, in the case of man, we have a "**germ**" of latent capacity, which can no more be fully or even nearly developed in this earthly state than the plant can be underneath the surface. Now while the plant finds the room, the elements, the heat, and the light, which are its essentials, awaiting it, can we accept the assumption that man, after he has struggled through the **strata** of the experiences of this earthly state, shall find that the **better world** he requires to make good his **innate demands** for a higher development of his mental powers and moral nature **does not exist.** In fine, that **everything is provided for the plant** "to bud and blossom and tree," but **nothing for man** and his is

> "A life of nothings, nothing worth,
> From the first nothing ere his birth,
> To that last nothing under earth."

We tremble even to consider what such a conclusion as this implies, since it would mean an **inexplicable fitfulness of caprice.** For it would imply that He who is consistent and absolutely true to order and to law through all His lower creation, and never disappoints, never breaks faith, not even with a **lowly rosebud**—when He comes to man—His noblest creature—He **changes His policy** and ceases to keep faith. In other words, we would have to conclude that man was only made to be disappointed, and his noblest desires and aspirations were never meant to be satisfied—but **to come to nothing.** If this be so, then our ideas of moral issues must be a delusion—of no more significance than the **shadows in a kaleidoscope**, as, for instance, in the ultimate issue of right and wrong there would be no distinction. The **antitheses of good and evil** would be merely imaginary, for both would evolve the same result and—

**mean nothing**. Then all our moral philosophy is a fiction—for truth and a lie—at last far off at last mean the same blank negative, as if both **never meant anything** at all.

Thus, it must be, **if death ends** all, and the whole of what man is **comes to nothing**. Then the whole creation would be nothing more than a **brilliant folly**. But there is nothing in all the range of human thought so absurd as such an idea. In fact if our sanest and best conceptions are not **all lies**, such a purpose is beyond all doubt **absolutely impossible**. Then we are forced to the conclusion that there is no sane explanation of the nature of things, and the constitution of man, except in an **adequate future life**. Man cannot be construed in the terms of the finite. His genius is like an incomplete sentence. The nominative is there, and many qualifying adjectives. The verb is also there, but the predicate is wanting. To make the sense complete and give the meaning of man, we must predicate—nothing less than a **limitless future—an eternity**. The essential character of man's mental and moral nature can have no other possible interpretation. Hence the **question** which has haunted the ages and staggered all minds—"If a man die, shall he live again?"—**is answered**, not only by the **Scriptures of Revelation**, but also by the **structure of the human mind**; not only by the proclamations of the **Man of Nazareth**, but also by the **calls of every man's conscience**.

> "Else, whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire?
> This longing after immortality?
> 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us;
> 'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter,
> And intimates eternity to man."

### 2. WHAT, THEN IS MAN? IMMORTAL MAN!

**A thousand voices**—voices from the heaven above and the earth beneath, voices from the eternal past, voices from the world around and the soul within, proclaim man's immortality. The echo of every voice is

**"O, MAN, THOU ART GREAT."**

For the future life indicated by the faculties of the mind and demanded by the imperatives of the conscience, is not merely an indefinite prolongation of existence, but **an eternal development**. This fact opens up an immeasurable world of possibilities. For everything in man that betokens his immortality postulates an exceeding greatness—a greatness that must go beyond all the most daring flights of the imagination.

That there is a greatness—a **present greatness**—in man, every thoughtful mind must recognise. Carlyle remarks that "The highest Being reveals Himself in man. This body, these faculties, this eye of ours is it not as a vesture of the Unnamed? . . . "We are **the miracle of miracles**—the great inscrutable mystery of God." Concerning man, Shakespeare exclaims, "How noble in reason! How infinite in faculties! . . . . In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god!" And the Hebrew poet in Holy Writ declares, "Thou hast made him but a **little lower than God.**" Then, when we come to the Incarnation, which is a fact of history, we have revealed the amazing possibilities of man even in the body of this mortal flesh. The magnificence of Solomon's temple was to enshrine the **shekinah**, but what must the "temple of this body" be when it tabernacled the "glory of the only begotten of the Father," and in a mighty mystery united God and man. The spiritual is not to be gauged by material measures. If, then, man can reveal such wondrous possibilities under his present limited conditions, what may he not become when this mortal shall have put on immortality, and all his powers and capabilities shall "grow and not cease" in the vast forever, until

"What was a speck expands into a star."

Let us strive to get some idea of the possibilities of this eternal development. Think for a moment, what it will mean, when in a **perfect state** wherein—unconditioned and unqualified

**NO PURPOSE CAN BE FRUSTRATED,**

man shall be equal to his boundless thought, able to do **all he wills, utter all he thinks, and express all the emotions of his emancipated soul.** Then the music that reverberates within his soul shall burst forth in full diapason and the thunders of his "**Hallelujah Chorus**" fill the heaven of heavens. Who can conceive what the capacity of man shall be when he shall be able to receive into the **auditorium of his mind** the mighty symphony of an innumerable host of such glorified beings—whose chorus shall rise and swell to all eternity?

Again, consider the possibilities of man's **resplendent beauty** when he shall find the world for which he was evidently created, and, in the dawn of the day of **perfect knowledge**, the cloud of ignorance shall lift, all shadows vanish, and man be given eyes to look upon the unveiled face of omniscience. This shall be the perfect light, which shall not only illumine his whole being as the clouds are illumined in the sunset, but also

**unfold in him its untold treasures of all beauty**, even as the sunlight unfolds its riches of colour in the rainbow. For the soul that that can "live and look upon the eternal light" must **partake of its beauty** and be transfigured by its radiant glories.

Higher still, all our words and thoughts are bankrupt when we contemplate what it will mean **when Love**—that divine reality—**shall come into her own**, shall inherit all things—as of necessity she must—and shall be able to give all that's in her heart, and, according to the law of her nature, shall be

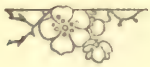
ENRICHED A THOUSAND-FOLD BY ALL SHE GIVES.

Yea, who shall begin to imagine, what dignity! what honour! what glory! what exquisite bliss! shall be bestowed upon man when "Love Divine—all loves excelling"—shall demonstrate her perfection and consummate her beatific purpose, and shall bestow the **wealth of all riches**, the **dignity of all honour**, the **soul of all life**, the **bliss of all blessedness**—yea, "the glory of the sum of things"

IN THE GIFT OF HERSELF.

Then shall the profound and wondrous meaning of that mystic word, "**The Marriage of the Lamb,**" be revealed, and in the "**banqueting house**" **of a perfect union in communion**—all hungers shall be satisfied, every thirst quenched by the fulness that filleth all in all, and God, even the Eternal God, who liveth and reigneth for ever, shall

**Clothe man with Himself in glory everlasting.**



CHAPTER XIV.

# The Appeal of the Eternal Heights

## SEEING WE LOOK FOR SUCH THINGS, WHAT MANNER OF MEN OUGHT WE TO BE ?

As we contemplate the possibilities of man, heights upon heights rise before our wondering eyes. Like great mountains, they tower above the stars till their altitudes are lost in the "excellent glory." From out that glory voices come to us. It is "the calling of the heights." We would fain linger a moment and listen to their thrilling tones.

In the first place we notice that though it is a "call from the **heights,**" it is not a "far cry" as a voice from some **far away dream land.** It is a voice that speaks within and reverberates the inner chamber of the mind. The difficulty in realising man's greatness is not, as may be supposed, in its remoteness, but rather because of its nearness. We fail to get an adequate idea of what we really are as men, because we are so much like the foolish man in the proverb whose "eyes are in the ends of the earth." The kingdom of man's possibilities is not realised by the "observation" of speculative thought, as something viewed or imagined in the distance. Its lengths and breadths, its heights and depths are **within** us and its signs are **right here** in the faculties of the mind. Canst thou limit the sphere of thy mental powers or find the range of human thought? Where, in all the universe, canst thou find wherewith to weigh the soul? All the precious things of earth have no worth by which to compare the value of even one soul. In our "little systems" we reckon by quantities and qualities, by masses and multiples, but these are **not the ultimate criteria of greatness.** These are judged by comparisons but man hath no comparison.

In the spiritual realm the whole creation is but as the "small dust of the balance." Behold, man is planned upon a scale more magnificent than the mighty systems of suns and stars. The universe is founded upon space, but man's **foundation is in the infinite God—nothing less!** Beware lest thou essay to **build thyself upon any other or lesser basis.** Else thou shalt be like the man who built "without a foundation"—worth the name—and disaster was the penalty of his folly. "Great was the fall thereof." **Great even in ruins!** So it must ever be. Man's inherent nature makes him great and he cannot reduce the scale of his dimensions. **His plan is as for a temple**—the noblest of structures and he must either stand to the **honor and praise** of his mighty and wise Designer and Creator or else in the ruins of his fall be His **unutterable reproach—a shameful "might have been."**

Again, consider the possibilities of that indefinable, incommensurable endowment we call **Life.** Does it not seem as if it were the very effluence of the Creator Himself—in which the **divine becomes nascent in man.** Thou canst not tell its bounds nor estimate its content. Oceans may be measured and sounded but for life—thy life there is no measure. Do not the subtle and mighty powers of life throw open the avenues whereby man may receive the affluence of his Divine source? Yet, alas, how men belittle this wondrous endowment? On every hand we see men making cheap the life of their fellow men and even making their own—**One sacred life—of small account.** Herein is the world's mad tragedy . . . Wilt thou be prodigal of life and squander thy priceless heritage in vanities? As if thou wouldst empty the ocean of life's possibilities with the potsherd of paltry purposes and mean ambitions. Or is "earth to earth" thy last word to the energy of God? Nay! bury thy dead thou mayst, but **for life there is no grave.** From above it came and thither it must return. Life springs of an infinite source and while, alas, it may be wasted it cannot be exhausted. Utter death is impossible. **For weal or woe for ever thou must live!**

Then further, look at the **possibilities of beauty** evident in the nature of man. We have noticed that man in his mental instincts indicates that he is meant for the light and darkness is alien to his original and elemental nature. This accords with the hypothesis that the author of man's being was Light. **"The Life was Light."** We cannot tell how this synthesis and identity can be, nor can we understand all that is meant by the metaphor of the "Light," but this we do know that **only the beautiful and lovely can come of light.** Nothing ugly or hateful ever had its origin in light. **From this we**

deduce that man in his origin and purpose is meant to be wholly beautiful and all that is unlovely is properly alien to his essential nature. Whence then the ugly and hateful in man? Not of the source of his being for that is Light wherein there can be no shadow. All that is not beautiful is born of darkness. Now can we discover from whence came the darkness? We see no escape from the conclusion that man himself is the cause of his own darkness. We are referring of course to moral darkness. Man himself became the reason and cause of this darkness when he turned from the light—the light of the Divine Nature and purpose—and thenceforth lived and walked in the **darkness of his own shadow** wherein the beautiful and lovely became the ugly and hateful. This is ever the attitude and penalty of ordinary selfishness which seeks to please self, rather than to fulfil the Creator's purpose. In our devotion to self we turn away from the Divine Author of our being, and then self fills the outlook and darkens our mental vision. All worthy ideals are obscured, and conscience is blinded by the master passion for self-gratification which is the ruling desire of the beasts that perish, and puts man

**On a Level with the Animal Creation.**

Man has thus demonstrated that that which has the possibilities of the best has also the latent possibilities of the worst. We see then the lamentable fact that by the perversity of his will man has changed his glorious possibilities of beauty into all the unloveliness to be found in human nature.

Here the **tremendous fact of the human will** emerges and moral responsibility confronts us with its inevitable corollary that **every possibility means a responsibility**. We are the scions of an omnipotent will and sharers of the divine volition which rules the universe. Herein we have committed to us an imperial attribute and are destined to wield powers and command forces beyond all our wildest dreams. **It is the divinity in man.** We may well be awed by the thought of the dignity of man as a moral agent and tremble with a great fear in the face of human responsibility. Eternal glory or lasting shame hinges upon man's choice.

The sweet persuasion of His voice
  Respects thy sanctity of will.
He giveth day; thou hast thy choice
  To walk in darkness still;

As one who, turning from the light,
  Watches his own gray shadow fall,
Doubting upon his path of night,
  If there be day at all!

For ever round the mercy-seat
The guiding lights of love shall burn;
But what if, habit bound, thy feet
Shall lack the will to turn?

What if thine eyes refuse to see,
Thine ear of Heaven's free welcome fail
And thou a willing captive be,
Thyself thine own dark jail?—Whittier.

The Immortal Dreamer, John Bunyan, had a vision of an angel coming forth to a **coronation.** In her hands she bore the sign and symbol of royal honor—a crown of resplendent glory—designed for the head of a man. The particular man whose head it was intended to grace is seen just beneath but his head is so bowed down towards the earth that it cannot receive such a crown. His hands—meant to wield the imperial sceptre—labor with a muckrake, as typical of one in search of earthly gain or perchance as one might who digs a grave. His eyes, designed and constructed by infinite wisdom to behold the heavenly vision, are set upon the earth, and, Oh, the pity of it, the angel of the divine purpose, with heaven's greatest honor and richest endowment, waits **in vain.** In heaven's purpose he is **a king**—an heir of royal majesty and power, by choice he is **a slave**—in bondage to things beneath . . . Art thou such a man as he? God forbid!

Then, ad summum, man is the child of Love. Our theology makes us familiar with the idea of **redeeming love,** but we must not overlook the significant fact of **creating love.** For it was none other than Love—infinite, Eternal Love—that created man. We know this not only from Holy Writ wherein we read that "**God is Love,**" but also from the evidence in man that he was made to love. Is it not love and love only which renders him worth making? And only love can produce love. Hence we say that the human heart bears definite testimony to prove that Love made man. Love's beatific will formed the purpose, Love's perfect wisdom designed the structure, and Love's infinite power created. From this we know that man was made for **the highest and the best possible.** For love has only one degree—the superlative and cannot aim at anything less. So when Love made man she brought all the infinite attributes of the ever blessed Creator into play in the fulfilment of her purpose. What wonder then that man is a creature of such glorious possibilities.

Here we have light shed upon what is known to us as the

"Eternal Redemption." Love made man, we have seen, and made him for the highest and best, but we know only too well that man has **chosen less than the best**—how much less no tongue can tell. Blindly man has rejected the supreme good and the history of his sin is the story of the persistence of his great and lamentable refusal. A refusal which turned his blessings into curses and brought all his woe. With his own fateful hand he closed the door against the chief good of life and shut himself in with himself as within a "Tower of Famine," wherein to perish with hunger. Nevertheless man still dwelt in the heart of the Love that created him. It could not be otherwise. Human love may cease towards her children for man's love is limited and perishable but not so with **perfect love—which must ever be love and while love is love** she must have vital relation to her children. While they exist, they must dwell in the heart of her consciousness and according to her inherent nature she must suffer in all their suffering and sorrow in all their sorrows. Herein is the great and poignant truth that infinite Love means unlimited **capacity to suffer**. And man, alas, became love's infinite pain! Thus it came that Love travailed with a mighty anguish through all the ages of man's self inflicted desolation, pain and death—laboring for his deliverance. We are apt to have the idea that the work of Divine Love for man's deliverance was in **one short Life and in one great great sacrificial death and resurrection triumph**. But in the very nature of love she could not be other than afflicted in all the affliction of men. (Isa. 63.9). The grace of God expressed in the Lord of Glory was only the manifestation of Redeeming Love. It was so to speak a proof of **Love's perfection.** It is we know the very genius of love to give and the sign of love's perfection is to give to the uttermost. So love proved her perfection by giving to the utmost **in the gift of herself**—even to the supreme sacrifice of the Cross.

Now, from this height above all heights—the height of infinite sacrifice—

**LOVE MAKES HER APPEAL TO THE BEST IN MAN.**

This is the supreme effort of the **Eternal Heart** of all being—Heaven's Love—to win back man's love or as we might put it —**to love man into loving**—and thus enable him to fulfil the purpose for which he was designed and created. For, only by loving the altogether lovely to the utmost of his powers, can man fulfil his **highest function.** He who aims at anything less than this is unworthy of being a man. For was he not made for the highest and best and nothing less? Without this soul-mastering, transfiguring love—life is not worth living.

Everything is in vain. The one factor, which can make life of any real and final worth, is absent. Its **present** can only be a continual defeat—a triumph of our worst enemies—an irreparable failure—for not one moment of it can be lived over again—and, such a life, cannot produce a **future** of anything but remorse—a veritable "horror of great darkness." **O, the tragedy of a misspent life!**

**Finally, We Face the Great Forever.**

In the light of our present potentiality for good or evil, and the eternal realities and infinite possibilities for weal or woe in the great forever, we may well, with intense thoughtfulness and solemn emphasis, **ask ourselves** the plain and sane question—

**WHAT MANNER OF MEN OUGHT WE TO BE?**

(1) What manner of men towards our **fellow man?** Let us be as those who have eyes to perceive the majesty of man—**simply as a man**—whatever his name, colour or class—and recognise the glory of his latent possibilities, that we may, as with love's reverence, devotion and self-sacrifice seek his **highest good.**

(2) What manner of men ought we to be in the **day of calamity?** In the day of the loss of earthly good—be as those who apprehend what we really are and the significance of spiritual values—wherein is the **"supreme good"** which cannot be subject to the contingencies of time and chance but like its Author and Giver "never faileth," and apart from which nothing is **worth desiring.** Then in the

**Day of Bereavement,**

when the anguish of a great grief threatens to unnerve us—what manner of men shall we prove ourselves to be? How shall we find the **staying power** by which we may be able to bear the test which, alas! is unmanning so many in these days? Let us as intelligent men remember that the **girding of the soul is Truth**—and true fortitude is the result of an actual **belief of the Truth.** Now, to this end, we need to perceive and believe the **truth concerning both God and man.** We are apt to be one-sided in our purview, and dwell too much upon the human side, hence when man fails us—as fail he must—we are put to confusion. Indeed, the fact is, that all our undoings in the exigencies of this life are because we do not realise sufficiently what God is, and what He means to be to us here and now. This is the secret of all our failure. . . . We have seen in our studies that man's essential nature de-

mands an infinite and eternal—a perfect—God. Herein, it is evident that God, upon a set plan and with a definite purpose

**Created Man for Himself—**

and nothing less. From this fact we must postulate that He Who made man thus is in Himself able to meet all human demands—in every detail and to the utmost. Now, if this be so, and there can be no doubt about it, then, is it not the great purpose for which we live, to discover what God is and can be to us, and withal, to prove His sufficiency? When we see our trials on life's hard way in the light of this fundamental fact of our being, we shall perceive that they are but stepping-stones, by which we may rise to "higher things" in the knowledge of God and His beatific purpose. On the other hand, the truth which we need to realise concerning man as he lives in this mundane world is that he is

**Essentially a Spiritual Being.**

In our discussions we have shown that there is no escape from the conclusion that man is a spiritual entity, and that his occupancy of this "mortal frame" can only be a temporary arrangement. Now, this spiritual idea of man may seem to reduce him to such a nebulous, vague abstraction that it can mean very little to us as representing the warm, vital personality we knew in the flesh. But let us calm our minds, and consider for a moment what the **"spiritual" really means.** Let us ask ourselves, as Professor Drummond used to suggest, "What is it in man that is of any worth to us?" What is it that we love? Is it the flesh and blood which form the body? Certainly not.

**APES AND DOGS HAVE THESE.**

Is it not the personality which the temple of the body enshrines that is the object of our affection? It is not the materials which form those "bright eyes full of wonder," which grip your heart with tendrils stronger than life, but the "gentle boy" whose spirit shines through those "lamps of the soul." This is manifestly not physical, but spiritual—as the real man must needs be. Now, have we not seen that this entity is infinitely more than anything physical can be, and that, unless the whole creation has no sane reason for its existence, this personality does ~~that~~—cannot—die; its "end is not dissolution, but eternity." This certainly means that in death that "gentle boy" of yours did not in the slightest degree go out of existence, but only passed "within the veil," and his life is as much a reality there as it was here. True it is that he is hidden from us in the Great Unseen. But this should not

disconcert us, since we know that, just as in material things, we have degrees of opaqueness, so the difference between the "veil of the unseen" and the "veil of the flesh" is only a matter of degree. If, then, in this bodily life, as we have seen, far more of man's personality is hidden than revealed, why should we be confounded when he goes hence and is hidden from us altogether?

Dr. Herber Evans tells a story of a little girl who had been all her life immured in the slums of London where she had never seen a bird except as a captive in a cage. When she was taken to the country and saw, for the first time, a bird flitting about in its native freedom, cried out, full of pity: **"Poor birdie, without a cage!"** "How strange and ignorant such a lament!" we exclaim. But may we not show even a stranger ignorance when we lament because some bird of our heart is uncaged and "flies away" in a world too large for the poor little limits of our sight and hearing?

But, after all, is it not the veil which is peculiar to our own fleshly condition that hides the spiritual entity from us "while in this body pent"? It must ever be so, and if we but knew all that it means, we would not for a moment wish it otherwise. This leads us to consider further the **truth concerning God**—the Divine Creator Who made man with all that he is in the flesh and in the Spirit. Here our knowledge is limited, but **we do know something**, and we shall do well to be very definite as to that knowledge, that it may be the "strength of our life." Now, within our limits we have the truth concerning the character of the Divine Being very definitely indicated. Not only in the Book of the Sacred Scriptures, but also in the "Open Book of Creation, which he who runs may read." The creature, according to its measure, is the reflex of the Creator. We know that this was constantly the ground of the appeals made by the Great Master, Who in Himself showed unmistakably the character of the Creator, whom He called His Father. But we need not think ourselves back to the "days of His flesh," and "consider the lilies" or "behold the birds of the air" under the Syrian sky, to assure our hearts of the "love that ever around us lies." Even the birds which twitter upon our housetops and build their nests before our eyes reveal to us enough of the Creator to banish the haunting misgivings of "little faith." One spring a **pair of Australian wagtails** built their cobweb nest in a silky oak at the back of our residence. In due course their brood was hatched, and soon filled the nest. All went

well till, just before they were fledged, there came one of our terrible summer days, with its scorching heat, in which plants drooped and men fainted. To this heat the open nest was exposed, and it was a touching sight to see the parent birds, panting and distressed, taking their turns to stand over the nest, with outspread wings, in the blazing sun, to shelter the bare bodies of their precious young. Oh, my brother, **if God so made even the birds, can He fail to take care of man?** Did not He Who revealed in Himself most clearly what God really is, in His simple love, call men His "little children," and would fain have gathered them to His heart, "even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings"? May we not, then, as reasonable men, with calm assurance, when our "loved and best" pass out of our keeping, trust them without a fear to His care Who holdeth both them and us in life—

> ". . . . till the night is gone,
> And, with the morn, those angel faces smile,
> Which we have loved long since, and lost a while"?

(3) Then withal, what manner of men should we be in **ourselves**? Shall we not be as those who have a **sane mind** and interpret life in the light of its realities and live not as **fools** but as **wise men**, according to the purpose of our Creator. As those "alive from the dead"—quickened by the Spirit of Life in Christ and awake to the Light—the Light Divine—which alone can develop a character worthy of a **God made man.** Then, with our feet in the path of Love's glorious purpose, our form erect, our face towards the heights of our Eternal destiny—we may greet with joy the **Inevitable Future**—and climb bravely and patiently "the steep ascents" of earth's experiences until

**"THIS MORTAL SHALL HAVE PUT ON IMMORTALITY."**

> "For ever and for ever,
> God willed it, and we are,
> More wondrous than the ocean wave;
> Far greater than the star,
> Though suns stand still and time be o'er,
> We are, and shall be evermore."

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